

**EVALUATIONS OF PRIOR NEH
SEMINARS**

**2016, 2015, 2014, 2012, 2011,
2010, 2006, 2005**

EVALUATIONS

2016

Evaluations for Punishment, Politics, and Culture, 2016

Evaluation # 22968

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar has been enormously rewarding for me. My teacher is amazing, and my colleagues are bright, welcoming, and diverse. I see both direct and indirect applications in my teaching. Some of the readings and activities I will use or mimic, and the general seminar atmosphere is inspiring as I look ahead to the fall. As always, it is a powerful and profound experience to be a student again -- and it helps me remember the perspective my students have on a daily basis.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Our director -- Austin Sarat -- is amazing. Erudite, funny, accessible, and creative. He balances rigor with scope and freedom. We look closely at many interesting and related topics, but we also have done some individually-directed research projects. The reading list he has set up is a great indication of this. Supreme Court cases, novels, short stories, philosophy, films, and social science. If I could add to it, some more detailed information about the American prison system would help ground much of the philosophical discussions we've had in concrete fact. I am very pleased with the program and its direction.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I am living off campus, but Amherst College has been great. There are wonderful places to study, the gym is very accessible, and the whole place is beautiful! I went to undergrad nearby, so it has been fun coming back to the area as an adult. The college is ideally located within easy walking distance of many attractions.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No. I am thrilled with my experience.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 22985

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Great discussions and ideas! I will take Austin's teaching methods and some articles into my class.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Great colleagues! No guest speakers no field trips which I have had prior.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Excellent!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Some guest speakers and a field trip or two would be nice.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Politics in schools;

Evaluation # 23020

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar has been completely transformative. Austin's deep knowledge, generosity of spirit, and his fair-minded pushing of each of the individuals in our group, together these elements have made for both an exemplary model of inquiry, and a dynamic group experience where the whole has been greater than the sum of the parts, which are significant in and of themselves. The material is rigorous, very rigorous, but the group has risen to the demand and we are all better for it. The curriculum is VERY well organized and the group has dug deep in this difficult and important subject.

This seminar has provided me with much needed teaching inspiration, especially with the idea of tackling directly some tough stuff, which I plan to do with my students. Some of the content of the course I plan to utilize directly, but also the methodology of inquiry that Austin practices, the necessity for learners to go out on a difficult limb, think for themselves and support their choices, this methodology has inspired me to utilize this approach with a variety of material. I teach adult learners of all levels, and this experience has been a revelation, great content and a teaching model of excellence combined!

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is exemplary. He has absolute command of the topic, and yet he is able to encourage all voices as the material is tackled. His restraint as he guides us through, so that we make discoveries ourselves is remarkable. This is what teaching should be! The cross-disciplinary nature of the material was particularly inspiring, as it not only makes sense for a deeper understanding of the topic, but it allows for each participant to have at least some material be within their particular area of knowledge and comfort, a kind of home-base within the overall field of the content.

The group selected for this experience is the best group I've ever been with in any Prof. Dev. experience, including a couple of other NEH programs. A great diversity of people and minds, with different ideas and voices all exploring together. The group itself has added a LOT to my experience, and I credit the local site for the great job selecting each of them, and for the overall group dynamic.

All activities have been valuable, and have accumulated to a value greater than each part.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Dorm housing is very, very nice, though air conditioning in bedrooms might make it better :). Cafeteria is across the street. Many school and business amenities within walking distance. Library is excellent, though it was closed at night, which was unfortunate. Wifi was easy to use in the dorms, with printing.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

AC? Keep the library open later?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23026

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I am so delighted to have had this opportunity. Everything about these past five weeks has been rewarding and challenging. I love learning and having the opportunity to push myself in a subject area outside my usual study has helped to intellectually excite me. It has been important to switch gears out of "teaching mode" and have the opportunity to engage with challenging texts, colleagues and a great facilitator. This time has reminded me of the pleasure of scholarship and my desire to continue my own education. I will leave refreshed and ready to bring my own excitement for learning to my classroom. While frankly, the coursework is of little direct relevance to what I teach my students, I realize that is not altogether important. What is important is that I spent time grappling with tough questions. I felt uncomfortable and unsure, just like my students must feel at times. I can relate to their struggles and better help them through the wonderful path of learning.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I have been so delighted to benefit from the warmth and intellect of Austin Surat. He has pursued meaningful discussion and content and facilitated the class with care. I am very grateful that he was able to bring out voices that don't always speak up, while curtailing some participants who would happily monopolize conversation. This shows that even as adults we can learn about how to get along with others and work as a group more effectively.

For the most part I found the cohort to be collaborative and thoughtful. Like any group of people there was some disagreement, but I do appreciate the director helping to direct certain people's over-engagement.

The topics and work were both fulfilling and challenging. I enjoyed our schedule. It was nice to have plenty of time to ourselves to reflect, however it may have been nice to have an outing pertinent to the material, separate from the class discussion.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College has a lovely little campus with everything needed. The dormitory was as advertised. It is well maintained, but the lack of AC and uncomfortable mattresses were not ideal. This being said, that seems out of the control of the program and is certainly not reason enough to speak ill of the program as a whole. The library was lovely. The dining hall was surprisingly good, especially considering that it was a fraction of the cost I expected. Megan Estes did a great job coordinating the

details of the program, and was very accommodating.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

It would be great to have more trips related to the subject.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would be really interested in a seminar focusing on migrants, immigrants and refugees. Learning more about the experience of those crossing borders and entering the education system in new areas would be a benefit to all teachers.

Evaluation # 23029

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I loved it. Very fruitful conversations and my fellow participants came from a variety of backgrounds.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director is amazing-very caring and also good at leading discussions.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The area is beautiful and Amherst College is a great place.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Maybe some organized trips? To Salem for a witch trial tour? To a prison?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23030

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar will have a great impact on my teaching. First, it modeled the way laws can be interpreted and helped build a foundation for judicial thinking. Second, it helped build capacity for an humanities approach to a curriculum. Most notably, the seminar format and discussions were fantastic. The single best seminar experience I've ever had, hands down. I will model my own classroom seminars after my experiences here.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was fabulous - positive, uplifting, supportive, funny, engaging. He is a master teacher and I learned much from spending 5 weeks with him. Megan was fabulous and helped facilitate an organized seminar behind the scenes.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was very accommodating. Housing was clean and good. Dining hall was also good. All Amherst facilities were shared with the seminar participants and Amherst College was fantastic.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None. This was a perfect seminar, and I am fortunate to have participated.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Etymological seminar study of the word "fabulous," and its uses in educational settings.

Evaluation # 23039

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Fabulous! The material was fascinating and enlightening. I think I can use not just some of the material but also some of the approach: the pedagogy, not just the content. We all felt intellectually challenged and stretched. We were asked to think in rigorous, logical ways. I loved the use of hypothetical cases to lead in to a close look at the texts.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director was caring and helpful and funny, but he also kept us all on our toes and fully engaged. My colleagues were friendly, intelligent, and passionate about the topic. I particularly admired how the director structured the readings so that they built on each other and seemed to be having a discussion with each other. We kept adding layers of understanding and nuance.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I was very pleased. The dining hall had excellent meals; we felt welcomed and taken care of; the facilities were all easily accessible; it was easy to check things out of the library and use the computers there.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No. All my expectations for the course were exceeded!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23041

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar was excellent. Austin is a fabulous teacher and he chose a great mix of teachers/ students. The readings were provocative and the discussions were deeply engaging. After the seminar, I will

think back on how Austin conducted the class as a model for my own teaching. I will strive for the same evenhandedness he consistently displayed.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The classes were lively and interesting. Austin did an excellent job crafting hypotheticals to get us thinking and then pivoting from those hypotheticals to the materials we read and watched. The syllabus, too, was very well-crafted. It was a logical progression through varied sources.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The host institution was incredibly hospitable. Megan, Austin's assistant, did a great job making everything easy and understandable for us. Megan and Austin also frequently checked in with us, which was very considerate.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None. They're doing a great job here.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I think David Cummiskey at Bates College could do an excellent seminar. The seminar with Austin reminded me of my work with David in college in the best way.

Evaluation # 23053

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I thoroughly enjoyed this seminar. I am leaving with a solid conceptual basis of understanding of punishment that I can use to consider the many questions I've developed over the last few weeks. As issues of punishment continue to be relevant in both my career and in society at large, I am confident that I can consider them reasonably and intelligently after having participated in this seminar.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is an outstanding human being. He is full of knowledge and wisdom, while remaining extremely approachable. He brings humor and fun to a difficult and emotional topic. He's simply a pleasure to be around.

The format of our seminar was very well-designed. The hypotheticals we explored were thought-provoking and entertaining. The readings were very enjoyable.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was very hospitable. Any requests we made were granted. The library staff was very helpful. Megan Estes was very responsive and dedicated to making our time at Amherst enjoyable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

My only suggestion would be perhaps changing the timing of the readings. There were weeks of manageable reading, following by a week of so much it was difficult to get through. Other than that, it was perfect!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23057

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was rich, meaningful, and intellectually rewarding. The seminar has given me a newfound appreciation for detailed textual analysis.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director, Austin Sarat, is extremely qualified to teach this seminar. He is witty, enthusiastic, engaged, and a renowned scholar in this field. The topics were interesting, varied, and complex. Class consisted of discussions each day, revolving around the socratic method, that demanded one's full attention. I would not change anything.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The housing arrangements, library, and computer facilities were all top-notch.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None. Please make sure this seminar is renewed, it's one of the best.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23066

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was wonderful. It provided an array of opportunities to explore a fascinating topic that is not usually studied on its own. The seminar broke down punishment as a driving factor in many different disciplines including history, literature, and law. But most importantly, from a personal perspective as well as the lens through which I will focus my students' treatment of the subject, the seminar led us through an examination of our own perceptions of power, control, retribution, and mercy. These are the themes which will appear often in conversations with my students as I incorporate the seminar content into my classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I have participated in several NEH summer programs for teachers, and "Punishment, Politics, and Culture" stands at the head of the list. The seminar was stellar in many ways, all of which lead back to Austin. His unbridled enthusiasm for scholarly exploration and analysis, as well as his ability to encourage self-examination, lie at the core of each session. His patience and guidance through the seminar experience were masterful and truly a joy to share with my colleagues. Discussions were both lively and relevant and led to a full and rich treatment of punishment and its implications. All participants were engaged and seminar topics often continued outside of the classroom. This was a wonderful group of colleagues and they also added immensely to the complete seminar experience. There were some social great opportunities, official and otherwise, to share different ideas and plans for how we intend to share the seminar's content with our students. Overall the seminar was a wonderful "whole" experience.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was a wonderful setting for this seminar. Megan did a wonderful job of handling all logistics seamlessly. The rooms and accommodations at Drew House were great - and the common room was a perfect space for relaxing or reading and getting to know the other seminar participants. The library was quite easy to navigate and copying privileges were very much appreciated. I had no problems with computer access and internet streaming of videos was fine.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23087

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I've done an institute before, but nothing compares to this seminar! Really spectacular! While there is obvious advantages to the institute style--the seminar style is really dialogical and discursive! Austin is an amazing professor.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is amazing and Megan was an excellent admin. The social activities that were organized in addition to the seminar was also a lot of fun!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Dorms were really hot (no AC), but central to downtown Amherst and right next door to our seminar location. Dorms beds weren't really comfortable, but otherwise great housing. Free printing was a big plus!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

A/C! But that's really it.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

-French Revolution

-Haitian Revolution

-Gandhi and the Struggle for Independence

-Russian Revolution (Kevin Murphy at UMass Boston or Paul LeBlanc at La Roche College)

Evaluation # 23088

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar was challenging and engaging. Each topic allowed for a diverse array of opinions and truly challenged participants' understandings. The reading was varied and applicable to the course though in some cases lengthy. If I were to suggest changes to the course I would suggest a wider array of texts, for example more literature, poetry, or propaganda to switch up the genres a bit. The professor was fantastic and extremely capable of leading the seminar without commandeering it. Overall, my impression was that his students are lucky to have him and his discussion leading skills are enviable. I definitely hope to employ what I've learned from his teaching style in Socratic seminars in my own class.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The professor and his colleague Megan were both wonderful. They went above and beyond to see that we maximized our experience and because of their efforts, the logistical workings and content were both excellent.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The housing was very sufficient with large common spaces. The only hiccup with the housing was that the heat waves made the upstairs rooms a bit uncomfortable to sleep or study in on the very hot days.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would suggest recommending that participants bring cars because Amherst is small.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23127

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I have genuinely enjoyed my experience at this seminar. The readings, which were time-consuming and dense, were appropriately addressed in our class discussions. And speaking of class discussions, those pushed me to reevaluate or ponder about concepts and situations in ways I had never considered before. I intend to adopt several of Austin's best practices into my own teaching, which include the Socratic

Seminar method and the moral dilemma hypotheticals, but also articles, some of which I will summarize or take excerpts from, that my students can tackle and digest.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was fabulous! He does a really good job of validating each person's opinion, and I really appreciate the time he took outside of class to bond with us. Megan was super accommodating and always had a smile on her face. My colleagues were kind, intelligent, and amicable. Each individual inspires me to not only become a better educator but a well-rounded and scholarly human being. I hope to continue to keep in touch with them after NEH. I am glad that we had a lot of flexibility in our schedule because the readings took a long time to complete.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst has become kind of a second home for me- the dining hall and our classroom are just 30 seconds walking distance away, the gym facility was a short walking distance away, the library (I LOVE the five-college system because it allows you to have that much more access to books) stored contemporary books, and the lounge area was a lovely area to do your reading or to chat with your colleagues. The bed mattresses and lack of AC in my room were less than ideal, even with the fan on, but having a kitchen at Drew House was a huge asset because many of us cooked or baked.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 23425

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I had a phenomenal experience. I feel completely renewed and revitalized as a result of the incredibly well-organized and orchestrated readings and discussions of this seminar. On a personal level, it was so important for me to have some time and space to explore the philosophical questions of punishment and tease out how they are enacted in the world. On a professional level, I reinvigorated by the very experience of being intellectually stretched, but I also feel that having thought deeply about this topic will help me as I navigate my own philosophy of teaching. I am incredibly grateful for this experience and will seek to come back to it in my mind as a touchstone in the future.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I think that every aspect of this experience was nearly perfect in my estimation. The director could not possibly have been more engaging, inspiring, brilliant and yet down-to-earth. My colleagues in the course did their readings, brought thoughtful insights to the fore in our discussions and I feel that we all pushed ourselves to be better scholars and classmates. Everyone was very respectful even when we disagreed and the director did a fantastic job of fostering collegiality in the community. The program

assistant who did much of the logistical arrangements was also wonderful and incredibly helpful at every turn.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The library (and librarians) were wonderful and in general I loved being at Amherst. I did not stay in the dorms, but the surrounding area is beautiful and a wonderful place to enjoy and explore for five weeks.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None! It was an incredible experience. It was deeply valuable to me and I think will be equally valuable to my teaching practice. My only suggestion is to keep facilitating this amazing opportunity!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

EVALUATIONS
2015

Evaluations for Punishment, Politics, and Culture, 2015

Evaluation # 21016

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience at the seminar was wonderful. The discussions were challenging, the readings fostered thought and discussion, and Austin did a great job keeping the seminar enjoyable and fun. I will use some of the discussion prompts directly in my teaching of Theory of Knowledge and history.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is an excellent seminar leader and organized the seminar so that discussions developed over time. He took an active role in organizing social events and participated in them. The seminar group was diverse and brought their various experiences to the seminar discussions. Overall, it was a wonderful experience.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I did not stay in housing as I live in the area but everything was handled well in terms of running the seminar. We had training and access to computers and the library system. Everything that we needed was available.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The seminar was wonderful so I do not have any suggestions for improvement.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21019

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

"Punishment, Politics, and Culture" has been an incredible experience. The seminar has had a profound effect on my conception of American society and the depth of discourse surrounding punishment and mercy. The seminar will have an immediate effect on my teaching of American history in that I now feel empowered to introduce Constitutional jurisprudence into historical moments. Similarly, participating in a seminar of this caliber has inspired me to refocus my classes around debate, argument, and problem solving.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director of my program, Austin Sarat, will be a tremendous source of inspiration for me and for my praxis and pedagogy. His ability to demand an intellectual and emotional investment into coursework while infusing a joyous spirit is astounding. As a young educator working in 2015, I can't imagine a

more relevant topic of inquiry or a better set of texts, films, activities and discussions.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst college was great! Library staff was incredibly helpful and the gym and dining hall were great to have. A slightly less expensive on-campus accommodation would have been appreciated though.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

My only suggestion is that there be more of an impetus to complete individual writing/projects in response to coursework.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I am surprised and slightly saddened that NEH does not offer any seminars related to LGBTQ history and culture.

Evaluation # 21020

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar changed the way I view punishment in the U.S. My beliefs and ideas were consistently challenged with insightful questions, and overall organization of seminar readings and videos. This seminar has enforced critical thinking on my behalf, and an open minded approach to teaching.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is an amazing director because he is down to earth and passionate about his field. The passion he brought to class every day made the content more interesting and engaging. Also, his assistant Megan was wonderful handling logistics, and made our five week experience that much more comfortable and enriching.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is a beautiful campus, and was easily accessible for the entire 5-week period. All staff, specifically in the library, made my experience enjoyable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21021

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The overall experience I've had at this seminar is extremely good. It has been a complete joy working with Austin and the other participants during this seminar. I teach philosophy and ethics courses at the pre-college level and I will be using much of the material and the ideas I've learned during class discussions and group projects in my own classes. I also do research and write on the topics we covered in the seminar and everything in the reading booklet has indelibly inspired me to continue pursuing this topic further. Thank you, Austin!

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is a very kind, honest, friendly, and very rigorous scholar. He's a modern day Socrates only more affable, probably. He always made himself available. I pursued further research outside of the reading assignments that required Austin to get me some of the materials. Never once did he respond with annoyance due to his own time constraints. And he always made himself available. Every topic was organized in a fashion that showed how each was connected in a sort of complex web of essential ideas related to punishment, politics, and culture. His organization and the way he delivers the ideas through questioning has inspired me to rethink my own class organization and pedagogy style.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

We were given a guided tour of all the specifics that we needed to know to adequately do research. I've utilized the library facilities nearly every day (I think I downloaded over 100 articles that were available through Amherst College's online journal database). Megan has done an outstanding job at being available. I even wrote her concerning a tooth ache problem that might've progressed to something worse, and she recommended a dentist!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

This is difficult because the class is excellent in every respect. I don't consider my recommendation as something that is needed because the seminar needs improvement. This is merely a suggestion, which I'm sure Austin has already considered and has sufficient reason for excluding it. I would suggest there be room in the reading schedule to explicitly learn about the current status of restorative justice as an alternative to punitive punishment. Although this topic came up during discussion, I think participants could benefit from direct readings and the dialectic that restorative justice has started in criminal law, especially because it's also considered as an alternative to punitive models of discipline in schools. Also, because Austin has combined film and literature with the readings (which I loved), I would recommend the film, "The Place Beyond the Pines" as a relevant film to watch while learning about restorative justice. The film came out a few years ago. It tracks the negative effects of criminal wrongdoing by analyzing how a son is affected by the "sins" of his father. The son faces the ultimate choice of either continuing the cycle of wrongdoing that his father started, or embracing non-punitive responses to the perpetrator such as forgiveness, mercy, and clemency.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would be very interested in a seminar that specifically focuses on juvenile justice: it's current problems and possible solutions in America.

Evaluation # 21023

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This has been the best summer I've ever experienced in my ten years as a teacher--refreshing, challenging, and fun. Certainly, it has allowed me to look at the texts I teach through a new lens, and I have plans to integrate some of the questions and methods of the course into my English classroom. But the most striking benefits of this seminar were not, ultimately, immediately practical. In this course, both in and out of class, we tested, questioned, considered, and celebrated. And this experience has reminded me that learning in community is akin to a form of worship, if worship is the shared appreciation of a gift. Because it is a gift to look closely at a small corner of the universe. It is a gift to be challenged by people who respect you. And it is a gift to discover, in the shared struggle to understand, genuine affection for and goodness within your peers. This is the gift of the seminar that I want to share with my students.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

This seminar was perfectly conceived and executed by the director, Austin Sarat. The curriculum is designed so we might focus our questions around a range of cultural, historical, legal, and literary texts. Every reading assignment was both singularly important and a meaningful addition to the larger conversation and line of thought evoked by the syllabus. Austin demonstrated equal seriousness and forethought in his use of group assignments, which were carefully designed to foster creativity and--really!--encourage new friendships. Finally, the discussions within the class each day were simultaneously insightful, frustrating, and funny--a testament to Austin's masterful facilitation. In brief, Austin's careful attention to all aspects of the course--intellectual and social--created an ideal learning environment.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is beautiful and resource-rich. The entire campus was open to us, so that we had access to a gym, a library, multiple museums, a dining hall, and, my personal favorite, a wildlife sanctuary. Austin's program assistant, Megan Estes, made us feel welcome from the moment we stepped on campus. She was attentive to any question we had and checked in regularly to ensure that our stay in Drew House was comfortable (it most definitely was!!). Amherst is lovely, and Megan helped make this lovely campus into a home for us for five weeks.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would love to see any formal or informal writing assignment(s) added. While the discussions were invaluable, I think the learning that occurs through writing is distinctive and could have resulted in my deeper appreciation of some of the questions of the course. I also waited eagerly for the moments when Austin would share his own thoughts during discussions, and I think the course might benefit from the development of a bit more traditional lecture. He is such a brilliant legal scholar, such a knowledgeable and thoughtful human being, that I wanted to hear more from him!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21044

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The most powerful aspect of the seminar was Austin Sarat's ability to make you think and examine your own views on the issues and topics being covered in this seminar. It is my belief that this type of presentation should be instead of the standardized mess education is infested with.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Everything was extremely well thought out. On day built upon the day before. Austin's knowledge on the topic was only exceeded by his ability to teach. Each week we were required to work in different groups and present material related to the topics that were presented. I was impressed with the degree that participants worked together outside of allotted seminar times.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Air conditioning would have been beneficial however, it did not bother me. The facilities were exceptional the staff at Amherst truly made us feel like we were a part of the Amherst tradition.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

none.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

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Evaluation # 21055

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was intellectually stimulating and thought provoking. The content and socratic seminar style of each class allowed me to reflect and question my own beliefs and the way I arrive at these beliefs. I was most impressed by the wide range of readings from philosophy to case law to literature to film. I hope I can bring this same style of text curation into my own classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I liked that each class started with a hypothetical. It made for a really accessible entry point into some really challenging texts. I'm excited to begin crafting these as starting points for my own classroom.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All of our needs were met and our accommodation were wonderful. Meg Estes did an amazing job making sure we were settled and taken care of! I am hotblooded so no air-conditioning in the rooms was a little brutal but certainly didn't taint the experience in any way.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The group projects were not my favorite not because I don't like working in groups though. The groups were a little large and that made it hard for decisions/ideas to get finalized efficiently. I almost think

groups of 3 would be better -- this would mean not everyone could present every week though. But maybe that would mean everyone could have at least one week off from presenting?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Dr. Paul Thomas @ Furman University. paul.thomas@furman.edu

Evaluation # 21056

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My experience in this seminar has been incredible. Each meeting was thought provoking and challenging. I have learned that a system of justice that includes punishment requires a shared set of values among all who participate in it. This will greatly impact the way I look at the behavior management system in my classroom and at my school. It was also humbling to be a student again - required to examine complex text then use it to support my position. The format of the seminar was set up so that all participants had the opportunity to share their thoughts.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin has a unique ability to make students feel at ease and comfortable speaking even when the topics are sensitive or challenging. The order of the topics flowed seamlessly and our discussions were so valuable. Three group presentations/projects was a perfect amount. We had a lot of freedom with our topic selection, which really allowed us to tailor our focus to topics that would benefit our instruction back in our classrooms.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I am so impressed with the hospitality at Amherst! Megan has the logistics running like a well-oiled machine. Everything was ready for us when we arrived. If we needed anything at all - she assisted in helping us. For example, my computer charger broke and she connected me with someone on campus who loaned me a charger for the duration of my stay. The campus is beautiful and well maintained. Every part of it from the library to the fields.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I really can't think of any...

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21061

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Austin's seminar was excellent in every way. He is a skilled, engaging teacher, who makes contagious his unflinching enthusiasm and passion for his subject of study. Austin's way of motivating his students is one I would love to emulate in my own classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Every person involved in the NEH seminar showed professionalism and kindness to us. No detail was left unattended to, and the college, its staff, and its resources were a true pleasure to experience. Austin exposed us to numerous philosophical and moral scenarios, which I plan to share with my students. The readings and films Austin selected for the seminar brilliantly informed class discussion. Class time flew by as we were consistently engaged in discussion and analysis of texts. The class to homework time was perfectly balanced and provided a level of challenge commensurate with graduate school seminars.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All facilities were wonderful. The library, computer lab, and the staff were outstanding.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None, truly.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21086

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Austin's class expanded my definition of punishment, and forced me to confront my assumptions around how, why, and to what effect we punish. Early in the seminar, he called it intellectual summer camp, and that's exactly what it was--but a summer camp that made us work hard. Not only will I model his methods of instruction in my classroom, but I will also continue reading and discussing these issues. Plus, I will be much more willing to jump into the next Supreme Court decision, now that I know my way around a court case.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

My colleagues were thoughtful and open-minded, and, even more importantly, fun. The organization of the topics was superb, with Austin's daily hypotheticals really setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of our readings. Each reading flowed nicely together, and it was truly gratifying to read cases at the end of the seminar and to understand the frequent references to earlier cases, many of which we'd read in class. The discussions were focused and broad at the same time, and the participant-led group projects were well-thought out really shed light on aspects of the that fell outside the core material.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Megan was amazing; she anticipated our needs, and reacted quickly when something unexpected came up. The library and computer facilities were great, although we didn't use them a ton.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I think this is an amazing seminar, and one that I will be talking about--and thinking about--for years to come. I have no suggestions for improvements.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21112

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I found the material and the format of the seminar to be very open, engaging and provocative. Austin has built an amazing curriculum, full of articles, pros and court cases that complement one another. The seminar struck an ideal balance of being anchored to essential themes and questions, while at the same time remaining open for diverging ideas or inquiries. This is primarily thanks to Austin's strong skill as a facilitator in the Socratic method. I plan on using many of the readings we discussed this summer in my Senior civics class. But I also plan on applying Austin's facilitation strategies to my classrooms. It is easy to stray away from a student-led classroom with the mandates and oversight at any school, but this seminar helped remind me of the importance of listening to the minds in the classroom and using them to inform my practice.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I especially loved Austin's technique for engaging the seminar at the beginning of each class. Regardless of the material we had been required to read, Austin always began the seminar with a provocative hypothetical situation related somehow to a topic discussed in class earlier in the week. These open discussions could take us into the first half hour of class, and helped us frame the difficult material we had tackled in the reading. It is always great to begin with a student's own position - that was always the only way I could access a text that was foreign to me. As Austin often remarks: "imagination is your friend, knowledge is the enemy."

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

My experience at Drew House was pleasant over-all. Megan Estes was so helpful in coordinating every aspect of our accommodations, and she was always open to suggestions or to address any issue in the house.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

My only criticism would be that the, considering the Summer heat in Western Mass, staying in a third-story dorm room with no air conditioning could get rather uncomfortable.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would be interested in a brief institute that explores the role of public art in political movements throughout the U.S. I am from Los Angeles, which has been the site of some dynamic, politically-charged street art. I know New York has an even older and richer history. This might lend itself to a brief seminar that includes guided tours of public art, studio spaces, youth engagement organizations, etc.

Evaluation # 21169

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I could not have asked for anything more from this experience. Austin is a top expert in the field, and he stretched us to evaluate our thoughts more thoroughly than we could have imagined. It has been some time since I have been asked to think critically and answer quickly the way I require my students to do. I think this experience has made me a better teacher in encouraging me to be my best by asking my students the tough questions in future class discussions, but I also think it has made me a better person because I was forced to confront some of my deepest-held beliefs from a logical standpoint and look at the world in a fresh way.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is, of course, extremely knowledgeable, but his passion for teaching is apparent in every seminar session. He takes an important and serious topic and makes it accessible and respectfully entertaining.

The readings and class discussions were challenging, but our colleagues made equally valuable contributions to the quality of the program. Austin and his team did an incredible job picking intelligent, passionate, and fun people who kept discussions and life at Drew House engaging and rewarding, and I feel lucky to have been included in the group.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Staying at Drew House enabled us to form a community in five weeks. Amherst College facilities are beautiful and in good condition, and Megan did a great job ensuring that we have everything that we need.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21217

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My overall experience was extremely positive. I truly loved the course. I will definitely use this information in my classroom when we study law and the constitution. I am grateful to have been given

this opportunity.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The professor is amazing. He is able to engage in the class in rich discussions connecting the readings and films and make us challenge and question our own personal beliefs. Austin is engaging, energizing, personable, and he has a passion for teaching that made the class an experience I will never forget.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is amazing. The staff at the library were so helpful. They found a missing DVD for me, they ordered a book for another participant. Megan Estes is fantastic. If there were ever any problems she addressed them immediately. Everything was clean and we were treated as students of the campus, not just visiting teachers.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21694

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

While I don't know that I will have the opportunity to teach a class covering these themes, participating in this seminar will definitely have an effect on my teaching practice. First and foremost, I will definitely think more clearly about how/why I use "punishment" with my students. More specifically when doling out punishment, I will do so through the lenses of rehabilitation & retribution. As an educator I feel I should lean more towards rehabilitation and this seminar has forced me to consider the difference. This seminar will also help me to become more effective at questioning and facilitating "difficult" discussions in a way that allows all students to have a voice. Lastly, this seminar has reminded me of the importance of stress free, grade free learning experiences. The seminar focused more on thinking, analyzing & articulating one's point of view, more so than on coming up with the right answer or scoring high on a test/assessment.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director, Austin Sarat, is a phenomenal educator. His passion for his profession and the topics discussed was evident from the first day to the last. He truly loves what he does & I hope that my joy for teaching is just as evident to my students. Although he's done this seminar several times and has likely encountered many other dynamic groups, Austin made us feel as though we were truly the best & his favorites... in a very genuine/authentic way. As for the actual content of the seminar, everything was great. The readings were clearly aligned with the topics and while some people naturally spoke up more than others, Austin made sure that all had an opportunity to speak.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everything at Amherst College was great!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Nope

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I think something on racism or race relations would be worthwhile. During this seminar ideas surrounding racial & socioeconomic level disparities related to the death penalty and our justice system as a whole came up. Race & racism can be difficult to talk about and even more difficult to teach without imparting one's own bias, so seminar or institute on this topic could be useful.

Evaluation # 21814

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I loved this seminar. Every day without exception, I felt challenged, supported, and intellectually alive. From the dual perspectives of student and teacher, I found it a joy to learn from Austin Sarat. Much of what we learned in class was utterly new to us, but Austin structured each class so as to introduce heady concepts in completely manageable - and fascinating, gripping - ways. He had the gift of understanding what each student was trying to say, no matter how muddled or nascent our thoughts might have been, and he treated his students with more respect, and conducted class with more humility, than I believe I've ever seen a teacher do. Our syllabus drew unexpected and illuminating connections among texts, progressively expanding our facility with legal concepts while deepening our own ethical stances on punishment. My fellow participants were all smart as a whip, but in very different ways, and I relished the sheer variety of their contributions to our conversations over the five weeks of class. I came away with many ideas for integrating real-world questions and texts (legal, ethical) into my English literature curriculum. More importantly, I came away having remembered what it is like to be on fire in your learning, and how a masterful teacher can make that happen not just for one student, but for a whole class.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Megan Estes did a stellar job coordinating our program. She was cheerfully helpful in any and every capacity. Austin Sarat was also accessible and earnestly interested in ensuring that we were well cared for, from well before we arrived at the seminar.

As I mentioned above, I have only the best things to say about the quality of Austin's teaching and the caliber of my fellow seminar participants.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is just a lovely place. Because I came to the seminar with my family, I was not able to stay in the Drew House dorm, but I was able to rent a college-owned house from a professor through the Five College Rental Housing Bulletin page. (I suggest including this website as a resource for future

students, as I had to find it myself.) Every interaction I had with College staff, from the Rental Housing office to the Valentine Dining Hall workers, was pleasant and helpful.

I was impressed by Frost Library staff's knowledge and helpfulness in their presentation about the library's resources, and I found the computer lab accessible and convenient.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would have greatly appreciated knowing in advance on what days Austin planned to organize group social events outside of class. I was one of 3 participants whose small children came along for the summer, and I could have participated in the group outings if I'd been given several days to organize childcare. As it was, I was unable to attend almost all the events, and I regretted that I was in that way limited in my connection to my fellow participants and Austin himself.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 21940

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar pushed me to think deeply about the ways in which as a society we punish those who have transgressed. I learned a tremendous amount from my peers and will definitely take Austin's Socratic-style teaching method back to my classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The class would start each day with a hypothetical, which later transitioned to a discussion of our course texts/films. Austin is clearly an expert in his subject, but at the same time forced us to think through our ideas rather than "giving us all the answers." He clearly tried to make sure every person in our class was at ease and involved in each discussion. His syllabus is well-organized and consisted of everything from popular movies to Supreme Court cases. For three class days (spread throughout different weeks) we ran our seminar in three different groups, which gave us a chance to determine the course of the conversation and inject topics that were not explicitly covered in the syllabus/course. It was wonderful to be in an environment where everyone was so committed to learning and sharing ideas.

Megan, who ran the program, quickly responded to any issues or requests and made sure the people living in the dorm were comfortable.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The dorm rooms were huge and the dorm was comfortable overall, since the main room was air conditioned and fans were provided in each dorm room. The dorm was directly across from the classroom and close to the library, as well as a very nice bike/running path through the wildlife sanctuary. Printing was unlimited.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would have liked more opportunities to write and share that writing with others (and Austin) for feedback.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

2014 Evaluations

Evaluations for Punishment, Politics, and Culture, 2014

Evaluation # 19451

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I loved this class. I will definitely be using some of the texts in my classroom. The answers I received during discussions (and questions!) truly helped me work through this topic.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is terrific! Funny, understanding. I hate looking stupid in front of him! ;)

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

There is no better place than Amherst and Western Massachusetts! Goodness, felt like I was "home." Great food! Sweet people. Tons of libraries! Everything you need

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would have liked to have had more time to work on my own stuff. I did it, but really had no free time

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19460

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Overall an excellent experience; this seminar has asked me to re-think some of my fundamental beliefs about punishment, the death penalty, and American culture. This seminar has also asked me to reflect deeply on the way that I use various forms of punishment in my own classroom. I plan to use some of the seminar readings/topics in my own courses; I am also using several of our readings to form a theoretical basis for an action research project.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I couldn't think of a better professor to host this seminar. Professor Sarat organized interesting discussions around important topics. His energy and enthusiasm was infectious.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Gorgeous campus and friendly staff; this was a great place to spend the summer.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I highly recommend this seminar to other educators and administrators. My suggestion is to keep this

program going & improve outreach so that more people (esp. public school educators) apply.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19483

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar provided me a chance to reflect on my teaching experience and my own philosophic views on this imp't topic. I know it has had an impact on my personal self which will translate into my classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I especially liked the group work and the presentations which I found to be informative and practical. The readings, except for the court cases, were a bit too philosophical and the State of Bliss got a bit stale. I would have enjoyed more class time discussion on the events of the day relating to the class. Chuck Beloved and the Green Mile.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Professor Sarat was very hospitable and accommodating. The Drew House was fine for accommodations and the Amherst facilities were superb. Thanks to Megan and Professor Sarat for a rewarding and valuable 5 weeks.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

as noted above

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19491

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This has been an amazing experience. Austin's teaching style and passion for the subject have been an inspiration to me. I teach a law class and his method for teaching legal concepts is one I am excited to use more in my class.

Austin clearly loves to inspire those "ah ha!" moments.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The reading was just a little too much. Eliminating a few readings would make it easier to allow us to

stay on track.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst library was very helpful and the wireless network and online course site worked great. Very intuitive!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Official NEH field trips/ or an occasional guest speaker would be nice.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Museum study/ art history

Film study

Music history

Evaluation # 19514

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Amazing! I will take back resources, lessons and a lot of new ideas to my classroom. I am especially grateful for things that I can use in classroom discussions.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The professor was amazing. He is really knowledgeable and accommodating. The syllabus and readings correlated well with the goals of the seminar.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Housing was great, with a perfect location. The school and all the employees were very accommodating and responsive to our needs.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Would love to see a Gilded Age seminar in Newport. Something that is multidisciplinary that uses the historic houses as a background for discussion.

Evaluation # 19522

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Unbelievable experience. Austin made me think, truly think, about so many things. He has changed the way I view punishment in the home, schools, and society at large. I'm not sure Austin realizes how intelligent he really is. He also sparks a passion for the subject matter in all who participate.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is one of the kindest people I have ever met. I loved everyone in the seminar and the discussions were riveting. I got to spend a good chunk of my summer expanding my mind and truly pondering our systems. Best summer I have had as a teacher!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Host institution is beautiful. A little piece of heaven nestled in western Mass.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Have the course earlier in the day, perhaps 9-11:30am.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would sign up for anything Austin wanted to teach. Anything World War II related gets my vote. I think courses on government, American government in particular are important and need to be taken by teachers! I learned so much about our system I can't wait to learn more.

Evaluation # 19528

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was a powerful experience. The readings, though quite dense at times, provided a common frame for our divergent views, and Professor Sarat's questions forced us to challenge our own as well as our peers' beliefs. As the seminar draws to a close, I wish that it were longer and that we could continue our investigations together. I initially found it difficult to separate my own intellectual curiosity from my role as a teacher and kept wondering where and how I would incorporate this experience into my class. However, I needn't have worried, for as the weeks went on I realized that by suspending disbelief and just "doing it" (that is the seminar and the work) I actually gained both specific knowledge that I can add to classroom discussions of law and the death penalty and general insight into my students' angst when I pose questions which have no easy answers (as we faced each day in class).

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Professor Austin was extremely knowledgeable; he prepared great materials, provided insightful hypotheticals, made each question a compelling one to consider fully. Class was always interesting and thought-provoking. Our weekly in-depth group investigative projects were extremely valuable and interesting, both for the three we each took part in and the six we heard about and experienced through a lesson. The combination of diverse text (novel, Supreme Court cases, philosophic/sociological/historic writings) and movies provided a fascinating smorgasbord of perspectives and sensory/emotional inputs.

Every member of the seminar provided interesting comments and took the program very seriously. The degree of academic and personal commitment was extremely high evidencing the respect we all had for Professor Sarat, each other, the program and ourselves.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everyone was delighted to help and very generous. Austin and Meghan both went out of their way to encourage group cohesiveness.

The library was great.

Housing was very hot and sticky! Only half the group stayed at the dorm which was both good and bad - bad for collegiality, good for things like privacy, use of kitchen and fridge (which was crowded as it was).

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Simple logistics: I wish we had class in the morning so that afternoons were truly free to travel farther without the 2 pm class to return to.

Pedagogically: I wish we had a guiding question occasionally. On lengthy readings especially, it would have been valuable to consider issues before asked in class. I also felt that some days the bulk of the conversation was primarily professor-student instead of student-student. Certainly, I learned a lot from it, but for quiet members of the group, I think it felt awkward (which I assume is the opposite of what was intended.) Many students need think-time, which was hard to have when one's name is called and an answer expected while one is still thinking.

We seemed very diverse geographically, but less so in years of experience (most were under 10 years)and gender (11 - 4) and not at all in terms of race and ethnicity. This was unfortunate.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Everyone should take this seminar from Professor Sarat. It was fabulous. Run it every year

Evaluation # 19547

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was much more than the class alone--it was the opportunity to engage in an intellectual community with bright and enthusiastic colleagues from all over the country. Their willingness to extend and explore the content of the seminar and shared interests (in teaching, literature, history, film, etc) enriched the weeks of our seminar immeasurably.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The readings, while hefty, continuously extended and challenged my thinking on each issue and were curated thoughtfully. Our every need was attended to. I can't think of a better way to spend five weeks of summer, or a better setting for it!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is gorgeous and peaceful. The dorm was clean and spacious, and we used it extensively as study/meeting space as well as socially. It is extremely convenient to have extended access to the library, and to have the gym and the variety of great restaurants and coffee shops in close walking distance.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Perhaps this is due to self-selection in the applicant pool, but our group of participants was a bit lacking in many forms of diversity that could have deepened the conversation. It would be worth looking into expanding publicity for the program to achieve this in the future.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19635

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was very enjoyable and well organized. I expect to incorporate (excerpts of) many of the reading materials in my courses. I was also given the opportunity to think critically about a variety of jurisprudential topics with expert guidance.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

- The director led the course with admirable seriousness, while being sociable and generous with his time.
- My colleagues exhibited the same qualities -- all took the course seriously and brought their best work and thinking to the table, while simultaneously enjoying each other's company tremendously.
- Topics were well thought out and generally the syllabus was very well structured, though I would have preferred more time allotted to fewer texts.
- Discussions among students could have been more extensive. Generally I would have preferred a more seminar-like structure (conversations happening directly between students) than this class offered.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Uniformly excellent. Our academic coordinator, Megan Estes, was kind and attentive throughout.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

- In the interest of making the class more seminar-like, and reducing the moments of "fill in the blank" teaching, I'd recommend, perhaps instead of the group projects, having students present on one of the papers or cases assigned. A student could introduce the case, be responsible for asking questions of the class and shepherding discussion, along with the professor. In a seminar full of teachers, I think this could work well.
- I would also suggest making one weekly response to a paper (the journal) a requirement.
- Finally, I would like to have had more meaningful check-ins with the professor. Perhaps they could be structured as conversations about written reflections or projects.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19638

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Being in this seminar has given me the opportunity to renew my vows to intellectualism. Despite the emotionally difficult nature of the topic, Professor Sarat facilitated in such a way that the group was able to move beyond emotion to explore our assumptions and deeply held beliefs. We were asked to recognize the complexity of the issues around punishment, take a stand and defend our position, listen to our classmates and the texts, and be willing to change our minds. I will most definitely incorporate discussion of the theory of punishment in my psychology class and a unit on punishment in sociology. I also work in my school and my district on issues of school discipline and this seminar has allowed me to consider how our attitudes toward punishment shape our attitudes toward school discipline and to better articulate my positions on reforming the disciplinary structures we have in place in my school and district.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat did a fantastic job of curating and leading the seminar. The readings were challenging but varied in such a way that kept our interest. The discussion questions asked in class were fascinating and led to very interesting debate on a daily basis. The group projects allowed us to explore our own interests and gave us a sense of ownership in the group. All of these things were clearly carefully planned by Professor Sarat and came together very well. At the same time, I appreciate Professor Sarat's flexibility. If we wanted to continue talking about an issue or article, he was able to modify whatever plan he had to accommodate our desires. Prof. Sarat also brought humor into the discussion whenever possible, so that such a dreary topic did not keep us from having fun. Speaking of fun, the social events that Prof. Sarat hosted (welcome BBQ, pizza outing, mini golf) were all fantastic, fun bonding experiences.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The Frost Library is incredible -- a great place to study, and an amazing catalog. I was very grateful for the orientation to the library that we had on the first day. Meghan Estes bent over backwards to ensure that we had everything we needed and wanted for the seminar, and I can't appreciate her enough. Her communication via email before and during the seminar made the logistical aspects of the seminar stress-free. While it is impossible for dorm beds to be comfortable, everything else about our dorm was wonderful. It is a beautiful space, modern and spacious.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would like to echo the sentiments of one of my colleagues to say that I think the program would benefit from greater ethnic and racial diversity, and that this might be accomplished through both wider and more targeted publicity.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with

contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19645

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar has been rewarding in several different ways. First we were challenged to take a close look at what we believe and why we believe it in relation to punishment, politics, and culture. Discussing any one of these subjects can be a touchy endeavor. This is especially true considering all of the participants bring different insights and beliefs to the table. Professor Austin Sarat was able to promote intellectual thought and discussion of these difficult topics through his refined Socratic techniques. The questioning process used by Professor Sarat is one I hope to emulate in my own teaching. Second, although we were very busy reading and studying for this seminar, I am appreciative of the opportunity I had for seeing a good part of the New England states. I now have a better understanding about events and places that I teach. This experience will help me to be a better teacher because I now have a personal connection to places like Concord, Salem, Boston, and Plymouth.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Professor Sarat loves what he does and it shows. He seriously enjoys teaching and is good at it. He deals with a series of very difficult subjects--specifically the death penalty and the idea of who or how we determine who lives and who dies. This he does by not dictating what is right and wrong, but in a way that we can decide for ourselves. He also assigned group projects. These projects were very meaningful in that we were able to focus on topics of our own choosing.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

From the very beginning, we were pleasantly welcomed. The cordial attitude was expressed by everyone I had contact with while at Amherst College. We were treated as if we were a part of the community. Access to all of the amenities of the campus could not have been any better.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Can't improve upon perfection.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

NA

Evaluation # 19676

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Participating in this seminar was a transformative experience for me. Wrestling with the very difficult and complex subject of punishment in American culture for five weeks, with the sensitive and artful guidance of Austin Sarat, among a group of colleagues who were both highly intellectually engaged and extremely kind and respectful, was such a privilege. Opportunities to be a part of a learning

community like the one cultivated by Professor Sarat in Punishment, Politics and Culture are rare, and I feel incredibly grateful to have been a part of this seminar.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The course was centered around what I came to see as a perfect syllabus. The readings beautifully built on, and played off of, each other and led each of us to a new understanding of the problems involved with punishment. Professor Sarat never ceased to inspire, entertain, challenge, and impress me. He built community in our group by engaging us in the difficult work of examining our own beliefs in view of the readings and jurisprudence around punishment in America. I cannot say enough good things about Professor Sarat. It was amazing to be in the presence of someone so brilliant who also possessed such humility and generosity of spirit. He made all of us feel like we had something important to contribute, and he honored everyone's perspectives, while challenging us to confront our most deeply held beliefs in a very real way.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was an excellent host institution. Megan Estes, the academic coordinator for the NEH program, was an amazing resource who availed herself to us for anything and everything we might need. The library tour and facilities were top notch and I was able to find everything that I needed with ease. The college is incredibly beautiful, and the dining hall offered delicious meals at a very reduced fee for participants in the program, which was wonderful.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I can't see how the program could improve. It was without a doubt one of the greatest experiences of my academic life.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 19685

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I am honored to have been part of Dr. Sarat's Punishment, Politics, and Culture seminar. The experience made me practice the critical thinking skills I emphasize that my students practice. It pushed us all intellectually and emotionally within a safe space that Austin created for us. Learning about the place of poverty and race within the American punishment system is making me re-think how our educational system and society deals with punishment. I plan to take some of this information back to my colleagues. I also plan on teaching some of the materials Austin chose for us.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Director: We love Dr. Sarat! It is a rare (and lucky!) opportunity for teachers to be able to interact so closely with a distinguished professor who is a leading expert in the field. He struck a successful balance between pushing us and being patient with us.

Colleagues: My teacher colleagues were wonderful. Some of my favorite parts of the summer actually occurred outside the seminar, when we discussed the class topics further and talked about implications for our teaching. We always listened to each other in class, and I feel like everyone respected my opinions. It was inspiring to spend the summer with such accomplished educators.

Topics: The topics were timely and fit together well; each week, we built upon the material of previous classes. We were all impressed by Dr. Sarat's choice of reading/viewing materials to frame the topics. These choices reflected deep thought and pedagogical skill on Austin's behalf. I ESPECIALLY loved that the readings offered something for everyone strengths. As an English teacher, it was refreshing to be able to read literature throughout. I hope he always includes *Beloved* in the seminar; that was my favorite part.

Organization: As a teacher, I really respected how prepared Dr. Sarat was for class every day. It was obvious that he spends a great deal of time thinking about the structure and content of each class. The flow of the class (readings, films, projects, topics) was also well thought out.

Discussions/Activities: I was intrigued by the format of the discussions. Sometimes it forced us to make a decision when we did not want to make one, and sometimes it forced us to admit we could not make a decision. They pushed us beyond our comfort zone, which I appreciated.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Hospitality: The level of hospitality we received was impressive. Megan and Austin made us feel at home at Amherst. We felt respected on the campus from the very first day, and they were always available if we needed anything. I like how Austin met with us one-on-one in the first week to make sure that everything we going okay.

Housing arrangements: Staying at Drew House really deepened the experience of the seminar. Some of the readings were tough intellectually and emotionally, so often times we found ourselves reading together for moral support. It was also nice that Drew was right next door to our seminar location. My only complaint is that it did get a little hot---the fans helped a lot, though!

Library/computer: Our library tour was excellent and useful. It helped at to the feeling of at-homeness. The computer facilities were also useful, especially our ability to print freely.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would have been interested in more opportunities to work on my analytical writing and research skills.

One of my favorite parts of class was when we got to break apart and had a directed/prompted discussion with each other before discussing with the class; I would have liked even more of that.

But that's pretty much it---I had a summer I will never forget. Thanks, Austin and Megan!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

N/A

Evaluation # 19771

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Humbling. Energizing. Thought-provoking. This seminar was truly an enriching experience for myself as a learner and educator. Austin Sarat's classes were challenging, as he demonstrated very effective questioning techniques to encourage everyone to think about and question their ideas. I learned valuable pedagogical strategies, such as questioning techniques, and enriching resources for my English classroom. All of the texts fit together perfectly, and I hope to take parts of the discussions, resources, and thought experiments back to my students. Throughout the experience, I had a new sense of what it meant to be a student in the classroom again, and in turn taught me important elements about my teaching that I can improve in the future. This seminar was truly life-changing, and I appreciate the intellectual rigor and simulation for five weeks.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

As a teacher, Austin Sarat is a master educator who knows how to discuss one of the most difficult and important topics today: punishment. He always encouraged each colleague in the class to question their thoughts and beliefs with rigor. The texts were effectively paired and connected, which created a cohesive classroom experience and "full circle" experience with the material at the end of the five weeks. Discussions were very engaging and Austin did a fascinating job modeling the pedagogy of good thinking skills. Everyone in the seminar was very supportive of one another and encouraged each person to think through their beliefs. People were not fearful to ask questions, which sparked further in-depth discussions about punishment and the classroom environment. This five week course was very organized, and Austin did a wonderful job making sure everyone in the program was happy and getting what they needed out of the program. Not only was the topic of punishment very interesting and pertinent to today, it was a challenging topic that challenged my thinking skills, beliefs, and values. A truly fantastic experience.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was a beautiful place to live for five weeks. The Drew House Dorm was spacious and well-kept; however, there were nights that were rather hot because of no air conditioning. Other than that though, the living and kitchen areas were excellent communal meeting areas and the bedrooms were spacious. The library and computer facilities were also exceptional. I always found everyone to be very helpful, and there were wonderful resources available for research.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

2012 EVALUATIONS

Evaluations for Punishment, Politics, and Culture, 2012

Evaluation # 15608

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was immensely engaging and effective. The readings, discussions and projects were challenging in both content and scope but we attended for scholarship and we got it! The work I did this summer will have both an effect on my role as teacher as well as my role as citizen. I not only plan to consider the role of punishment in school and my students' lives, but continue considering the role of punishment in society. My town offers Restorative Justice and I am committed to becoming involved in that work.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director held a high standard for us all. Using a socratic style seminar, we were all expected to know and have reflected upon the readings as well as formed our own ideas around the subjects. He was very witty, engaging and got to know us all providing a lightness that was necessary for the gravity of our subject.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The library and computer facilities were excellent and easy to use. We had an introductory session that was quite helpful in using the facilities. From there on, I was able to use the vast array of databases to research my projects, find what I was looking for and print with no problem. There were also a variety of relevant books available. The Director's assistant was quite amiable and helpful in garnering necessary items for the housing situation.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15638

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar has been a high point in my intellectual and pedagogical development; I feel incredibly fortunate to have been able to participate. The readings, films, and discussions have challenged me intellectually and impacted me emotionally. The ability to spend five weeks in discussion with the other teachers (incredibly smart people who do indeed span grades from Kindergarten to 12th!) has been such a gift. The sense of community is amazing and our discussions routinely continue beyond our seminar meetings. I am certain that this seminar will influence the way that I incorporate the topics of human dignity, prisons, discrimination, civil disobedience/conscience, and the death penalty into my

curriculum. It will also impact the way that I respond when a student breaks a rule.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is the embodiment of the kind of educator I hope to be. The joy he takes in teaching and in the sharing ideas is obvious. His skill in leading discussion and in using hypothetical situations to clarify our ideas and positions is something I hope to emulate in my own classroom.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Megan Estes thought of everything we would need before we needed it (ID cards, library printing account, Ethernet cords, gym schedule, campus tour, a printout of local bike rental shops, etc.). Her hard work was much appreciated! Austin checked in with us frequently regarding the housing and our situation in general, and he and Megan responded with almost comical swiftness whenever we raised a concern; for instance, when someone noted how crowded the dorm fridge was, a couple of mini-fridges were delivered before we had time to return to the dorm! I lived off-campus but still had a key to the dorm, so I was able to have access to the common room and refrigerator whenever I needed it. Austin's organizing of social events (dinner, mini-golf, fro-yo) also helped bond the participants as a group.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No. On our first day at Amherst, we were told "Welcome to Paradise." I was skeptical then, but it's true!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I heard Dr. Darryl Mace (Cabrini College, Radnor, PA) speak to high school students about the murder of Emmett Till. His approach was something I'd like to emulate. He was not only interesting and informative but also able to discuss topics related to race in a productive way; this is something I would like to do better in my own classroom.

Evaluation # 15650

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Energizing. Humbling. Engaging. This seminar has done more for my personal and professional growth than any other form of professional development in my 10 year teaching career. As a person, I've been forced to reevaluate some of my most basic beliefs about justice and punishment. As a teacher, I've witnessed Sarat (a master teacher) effortlessly lead the participants through discussions of some of the most heated topics of the day. As a professional, I've gained a network of other teachers from across the country who will not be part of my support team for the rest of my career. I have no doubt that I will be a more effective and more thoughtful leader of classroom discussion and that I will be more deliberate in how I handle punishment in my classroom. I cannot wait to engage my own students in what I believe is one of the most important topics for them to think about: punishment.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat leads discussion in a way in which everyone is interrogated--not in a hostile way--so we can get to the core and complexity of the issues we're discussing. Austin has a unique skill in being able

to discuss controversial topics without showing his own hand and without making any one side seem more or less valid. The readings were balanced and tied brilliantly and sometimes unexpectedly to the topics we were studying.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst college was nothing but welcoming. Every day Austin asked if we needed anything and, if we did, it was immediately met. Megan Estes was invaluable in helping us navigate a new city and campus and the library was incredibly accommodating, keeping special hours just for our group. Housing was appropriate and comfortable. We had everything we needed and more.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

A full year instead of five weeks!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15655

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Punishment, Politics, and Culture was the best educational experience I've ever had. Austin Sarat compiled readings that were inquisitive, intriguing, and tested the comprehension of the whole group. Each day we met for seminar, everyone was engaged. Furthermore, Austin's witticisms and keen depth of experience/knowledge (of his subject area) assisted in so many ways: first, in making this esoteric topic REAL for each participant; second, by him taking a real interest in how we (the seminar participant) were doing and what he could do to assist us in taking this topic back to our school site.

Henceforth, I feel like so much of this will be directly applicable to my teaching. From the pedagogy to some of the topics -- I plan on integrating a myriad of information into my 11th grade American Lit. classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

There was one specific aspect of the program that stood out to me the most -- Austin's teaching pedagogy. I love the inquisitive questions Austin would ask at the beginning of class (as well as throughout the lecture). It would help promote full understanding of the topic at hand -- and at the same time -- was something I could easily take and use in my 11th grade classroom.

Secondly, hands down, Austin is the best and brightest teacher I've ever had. His knowledge is endless and he promotes a style of learning that turns into a "craving."

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was a beautiful place to visit. The facilities, staff, and campus were all wonderful. I had never been back to Massachusetts and was so pleased with everything.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No. Please allow Austin Sarat to keep doing this; he really does a fabulous job.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15683

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience of participating in "Punishment, Politics and Culture" was no less than life-changing. The material was challenging on many levels, the professor was among the most gifted I have encountered, and the seminar style provided for an intensely intellectual environment that invited higher levels of inquiry and thinking. The suppositions upon which I based my ideas and thoughts were constantly challenged in the most edifying of ways as I learned about subjects previously only looked at on a surface level. I have learned a great deal about the topic and about how to engage students that I will use in my own teaching.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin's subject expertise combined with his ability to engage, reach and challenge every student were the high points of the seminar. Regardless of background knowledge, he made every student feel comfortable as well as consistently challenged by the material. Austin's teaching style, the material, and the method of Socratic dialogue produced an experience that was rigorous, exciting, and stimulating.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The dorm was fine, though the beds are very uncomfortable. Very. Central air conditioning doesn't seem too much to ask, does it??

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I am grateful for this amazing learning opportunity. The teaching world rarely provides for something this rich. Thank-you!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15693

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The five weeks were absolutely enriching on a personal and professional level. I return to my home state armed with many new ways of thinking about crime and punishment and justice and mercy etc. and am excited about sharing my on-going questions with my students.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I enjoyed the variety of the readings and film most of all. While the class engaged in some excellent discussions, I do wish there was greater variety in the manner in which we unpacked the reading. I found the group work less helpful for me intellectually, though these groups were a great way to have more conversations with the other participants. I would have preferred engaging in alternative methods of connecting with and understanding parts of the reading that were most relevant and interesting to me.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Top notch. I always felt well taken care of and treated with respect and friendliness.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Again, I wonder if there's a way to integrate greater variety into the seminar--perhaps one group project (rather than three), one paper, a different way to unpack the readings. I did enjoy the questions Austin posed in seminar, but he had a clear agenda that I sometimes felt was limiting. I did wish to hear more from my colleagues in the seminar about what stood out for them and what they took away from the readings.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15722

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar "Punishment, Politics, and Culture" was truly incredible. I feel as though the seminar has opened my eyes to the possibilities of teaching and learning in terms of the role of justice and what we owe each other as human beings. In the classroom, I anticipate adding many of the topics that I learned in the seminar as well as the methods that Austin employed; the experience provided a framework for me to begin to address the issues that I care about and the issues that I believe my students will benefit from discussing in the context of our work in literature. Justice, politics, and "how our society punishes and why" are central to literature and society, and I feel that the seminar itself will enhance the work that I do each day with my students.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Professor Sarat is the best teacher that I have ever had. I feel fortunate to have met him and I believe that this experience has transformed the way I think about teaching and learning. He was able to create an environment in which we seriously addressed the topics at hand, showed immense respect for one another, and developed personal connections to the topics and each other. I've never been in the presence of such a consummate scholar with so much enthusiasm for the topic and life itself; Professor Sarat's enthusiasm for his subject matter and his belief in education and the power of ideas will stay with me. The scenarios presented, the texts selected, and the quality of the discussion were outstanding. He pushed us to examine and reexamine our most deeply held beliefs about the nature of justice, the requirements of a just society, and roles of all involved in the carrying out of justice in our society. I felt challenged to critically evaluate the arguments presented in a way that I'd never been

challenged before, and I sorely needed the experience of being in the NEH seminar this summer. I feel fortunate to have been in the seminar and I can't recommend this program or the director more enthusiastically. I look forward to keeping in touch with Professor Sarat and the other participants, who create a learning community this summer unlike any other.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is a beautiful institution. The housing arrangements were great; Megan Estes, Professor Sarat's assistant, is an incredible woman with infinite patience and attention to detail. The hospitality of the location, and the attention paid to our needs, was truly incredible and touching. I appreciate all that was done to make our stay a happy one.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The only suggestion I would have is for air conditioning to be installed in Drew House. I would also extend the seminar indefinitely, with paid fellowships for Dr. Sarat and the sixteen whiz kids who inhabited the state of Bliss.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15727

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Before I applied for this NEH, a colleague who had taken the course said it was the best academic experience she had ever experienced. I can now second that thought. It was simply amazing, and will have not only a profound impact on how I teach and work with other educators, but also in how I see the world around me.

Our society places great emphasis on our rights. While 'free speech' and other First Amendment rights often capture people's imagination and get much coverage, I have been asked to consider the 8th Amendment, and how we punish, as being a crucial lens through which to view and understand our culture.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat was, as he might describe something, "Brilliant. Totally fabulous." His pedagogy was an ideal blend of academic rigor, contemporary relevance, and engaging presentation. From deeply thought-provoking hypothetical scenarios to supremely effective Socratic questioning, Professor Sarat shared his passion and knowledge for this topic in a way that will make me reconsider and modify my own pedagogy.

Most importantly, he presented a nuanced and balanced view of how society's approach punishment, making the participants question their own values and giving more-than-fair shake to all sides in debate.

The 'texts' were a brilliantly thoughtful collection of academic theory, Supreme Court cases, historical

critiques, historical and contemporary literature and films.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Professor Sarat, Megan Estes, Amherst College, and all other support staff were simply amazing in their hospitality and willingness to accommodate and listen to our needs. Gracious doesn't even begin to describe it. Everyone was delightful and supportive and I could not recommend Amherst College as a venue any higher.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15732

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

It is hard to articulate how valuable this seminar has been. It has changed me in incalculable ways and it has been an urgent reminder of the value of education. As a teacher and as a student I feel that my inspiration has been renewed. Austin masterfully introduced philosophical ideas and concepts and showed how they much of an impact they had on our lives. Setting the content aside, I think the single most valuable learning experience was watching Austin teach. He is exemplary in creating a dialogue and not lecturing, recognizing each participant's value, and encouraging everyone to participate without judgment.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The readings were challenging and meaningful. Their purpose and application was crucial to each discussion. Discussion itself was the focal point of the seminar; there was no pedantic lecturing, but rather an open, honest, and stimulating discourse that everyone participated in.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everything was reasonable and comfortable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

The history of American Public Education

The Study of Hip Hop and its social, political, and economic impact

Evaluation # 15758

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

It is impossible for one to leave this seminar and be in the same place where she started. Through the hosting professor and the teachers selected for the seminar, I have been exposed to varying teaching methods - namely the seminar-style - and joys of being challenged in my views. Seeing how important verbal synthesis is, I will be bringing discussions into my classroom that explore topics, as we did during the summer, and seek to move you to a place of decision. The challenges, thoughts, and scholarship presented in the seminar has brought me to a new level of inquiry and consideration, which is something that will never leave.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Sublime. All of the aspects listed, where they apply, were absolutely spectacular. Even when it seemed like we wouldn't be able to discuss all of the information that we had digested in the readings, it surfaced through the nature of discussions. The professor was of the highest quality and inspirational. His demeanor immediately causes you to let down walls of pretense that might exist, and ask you to let yourself be moved from complacency/ease.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Again, all of it was completely hospitable. In fact, there should have been a pineapple present in the foyer of the house we stayed in. The campus facilities and employees were accommodating in ways that shows deliberate hospitality.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Make the seminar longer. No, 5 weeks is perfect, but the time seemed to leak, particularly toward the end.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 15809

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Punishment, Politics, and Culture may be the best and most important professional development I have ever engaged in. Thinking deeply on such a significant topic, one of which plays out in all aspects of the public school system, has been crucial to my professional growth. I can see so many ways to integrate the course readings and court cases into my social studies classroom. Most importantly, I will be surely adapting the socratic style of seminar discussion to my classes. Constructive face to face dialogue is often missing in many aspects of 21st century society. Using some of the methods here will challenge but also help my students communicate effectively and respectfully. The seminar material will also be brought to our Social Studies Department and integrated into our curriculum. I have been very motivated to bring new material to our group and the resources we've worked with in the seminar

will help lead to deep conversation department wide and in our classes.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The Punishment, Politics, and Culture seminar was one of the most intellectually rigorous courses I have ever been a part of. Austin is an amazing professor who knows the topic inside and out. His questions are thought provoking and the seminar style he uses forces you to think in all directions. The intense discussion and debate was only made more stimulating by the professional, diverse, and thoughtful colleagues in the program. It is refreshing to be on the other side of the desk and be challenged to think on such a fascinating topic with a phenomenal group of educators.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was an idyllic setting for our summer seminar. The community offers so much in terms of culture, resources, and has excellent facilities. The housing was great. The library and computer access was always available and worked well. We couldn't have asked for anything more! Everything was perfect and if it wasn't Megan and Austin addressed it immediately.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

An area for improvement would be to replace one of the group projects with a short academic paper. I value synthesizing class discussions, readings, and research in writing and think this could have been valuable to our work.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Politics of Education

Political Philosophy

Culture and History of the Berkshires (selfish seminar topic because that is where I live and teach!)

Evaluation # 15972

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar was phenomenal. Austin did a wonderful job modeling what good thinking look likes. He pushed us to think about the complexity in everything and the importance of weighing the multiple sides of every issue. At the same time, he emphasized the importance of "getting off the fence" and being willing to define our values and opinions. Not only was the specific topic of punishment very interesting, this seminar was an excellent reminder of the power and importance of the intellectual investigation of ideas. I will definitely use some of those general principles in my classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director and his assistant were incredibly helpful and showed constant, genuine concern about our enjoyment of the seminar and the facility. The weekly recreational activities helped to foster a sense of community.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All wonderful.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 16146

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Never have I had a summer like this. I feel intellectually rejuvenated, even after a grueling school year. The things I learned this summer will surely find their way into my curriculum as I feel compelled to bring the level of academic rigor back to my students. There is nothing like being a student to enhance one's teaching.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was terrific. The highly academic nature of the seminar put demands on us as participants, specifically the nightly readings. That said, he encouraged us to engage with the material at a high level. He orchestrated discussions like a maestro, bringing all voices into the fray and keeping the ideas flowing. All of us felt comfortable from the beginning, and he instilled a strong sense of camaraderie in the group. He was humorous, academic, and easy to talk to. A truly wonderful host.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Outside of not having air conditioning (which made for a few tough nights of sleeping), the Drew House was wonderful. The rooms were spacious, clean, and comfortable. The common room gave us room to unwind, meet in groups, and grow together as a group. The library was close by and offered ample opportunity for research and study. Everything was convenient and shopping proved to be no hassle at all. Overall, a wonderful facility.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Offhand, no. The seminar exceeded my expectations in every way.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 16178

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The Punishment, Politics, and Culture was an emotional and intellectual tour de force. Our intrepid Captain Austin navigated us through the uncharted water of the complexities associated with the role of punishment in our society. For sure, there were times I wanted to walk the plank and just dive into the shark infested waters as the work was intense and thought provoking. I came out of the experience not only as a better teacher, as I plan to create a unit using the material that was given in conjunction with novel, such as, Beloved and Crime and Punishment. Further, I came out of the 5 week seminar that is is far better to ask questions than to answer them, and for this I am grateful for the Amherst experiment.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is the smartest, kindest, sensitive, and authentic Mr. Burns look-a-like, a character from the The Simpsons animated sitcom. He is nuclear fusion. The energy he injects into our socratic conversation left me spellbound as he genuinely is interested in how I arrived at my particular position. Even then, nothing is static, and he allowed me, rather encouraged me to rethink my perspective and if I changed positions, then it was okay, as he is not interested in whether I got it right or wrong, that is not his role. He was facilitating my reasonings, my perspectives.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The accommodations offered by Amherst were top-notch. First, the library collection is outstanding staffed by professionals who are motivated in providing quality service. The participants were housed in a gorgeous dormitory, and the facilities staff were also very accommodating.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

2011 EVALUATIONS

Evaluations for Punishment, Politics, and Culture, 2011

Evaluation # 13596

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar, Punishment, Politics and Culture will have an immeasurable effect on my teaching and scholarship. The content studies brought new perspective as well as new resources to my attention. The seminar content focus on all aspects of punishment, the punisher and the punishee can be applied to World History, US History I and II as well as current events often culled from the headlines. Content focused punishment's relationship with and effect on morality, culture, law, history and religion. All supplemental readings dovetailed into our group projects where the students analyzed and applied the week's topic contributing to multimedia presentation. The groups were able to engage in-depth investigations of topics of interest with lively debate. Group projects encouraged each student within the seminar to exchange ideas and discuss new methods to incorporate the materials into our classrooms.

Finally, the seminar enriched our content as classroom teachers. The primary and supplementary resources were obviously carefully selected to breathe fresh air into a subject that could become somewhat stale over time without fresh perspective. This seminar was an amazing and incredibly valuable experience.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Professor Sarat is hands down one of the best professors I have been lucky enough to study under. His knowledge of the content is incomparable, his seemingly effortless organization of the materials is exemplary, his teaching style encourages intelligent, lively debate and his mere presence inspires his students to come with their "A" game, each and every class. He has an uncanny knack for choosing complete strangers and creating a community of learners that form family ties. Bottom line, I chose the seminar because Professor Sarat was teaching it. I welcome the opportunity to join his seminars every summer! His seminars beyond compare because of the quality of content, the enthusiasm he brings to his seminars and the continued expectation of excellence from his students. Professor Sarat takes the time to ensure his students are comfortable, content, and worry free. He is both approachable and accessible. His concern and interest in his students' welfare is sincere.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is a wonderful host. The campus is absolutely beautiful and well maintained. The library and staff are kind and accommodating and the college staff is always available to help when asked. Nothing is ever too small or unimportant to Megan Estes, Professor Sarat's secretary. She is an amazing woman whose capabilities are bottomless.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13653

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was priceless. I learned a lot about the justice system that I wasn't aware of before. We were all forced out of our comfort zones by examining our own truths.

What I will take back won't impact my lessons and direct teaching as much as my ability to advocate for my immigrant students. I think time will help me realize how much of an impact this experience will have on my teaching in the long run.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director is very welcoming and enthusiastic about the seminar topic and getting to work with teachers. He chose a wide range of participants for a diverse environment with differing view points. The seminar is very well organized and flowed smoothly from topic to topic while maintaining the overall theme of punishment.

The discussions wouldn't have been the same without a diverse group of participants and the instructor's passion and depth of knowledge regarding the topic.

Group projects were due 3 out of the 5 weeks, which allowed us to further investigate topics of our interest. Plus, it broke up the routine for the week and allowed us all to learn from each other both during collaboration and class presentations.

The instructor had a welcoming barbecue, which was a great way to meet and greet each other. In addition, he planned three other activities for us all to bond outside of the traditional setting.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The college was very accommodating- a special group tour of the grounds was provided, extended library hours were arranged, and helpfulness of college staff was abundant. The dormitory, which housed the majority of participants was updated, clean, centrally located, and spacious.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13670

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was an outstanding and memorable intellectual experience. Professor Sarat is brilliant, is excited about his subject, and loves to teach. He met with each one of us individually and made sure we were getting something out of the program. The other participants were fully engaged and brought so much knowledge and experience to the seminar. I know that I will return to teaching energized and enthusiastic about the process of teaching and learning as a result of my experience at NEH Amherst.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Professor Sarat is truly an expert in this subject and loves to teach about it. He is very talented at getting participants to think deeply and critically about various issues. The topics, discussions, and activities were all consistent with the way the course was advertised and were meaningful to the experience. The required readings were diverse and covered various genres which made it more engaging. We received the syllabus in spring, which helped us get a head start on the readings.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The dorm was very comfortable. Use of the library and gym were spectacular. All campus employees were extremely helpful. The only problem is the parking. Despite the sign "NEH Parking Only," people always used the parking which meant we had to park somewhere else.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13681

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience of devoting 5 weeks exclusively to thinking, studying, discoursing, and writing is one that I will never forget. I learned a great deal from Austin and also from the other program participants. I also discovered some new intellectual avenues to pursue. Participating in this seminar will affect my teaching: Austin was an inspiring discussion-leader and I hope to incorporate his techniques into my classroom practices. Additionally, I have decided to pursue volunteering for the Innocence Project in my home town, and that's something I definitely wouldn't have thought to do had I not studied punishment, justice, and law this summer.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is a truly gifted educator and I was so honored to be able to learn from him this year. He also appreciated having us to teach and showed so much enthusiasm and passion for his subject. I liked how the seminar was organized logically, and while there was a lot of reading to do, it was all interesting and worthwhile. While I learned a great deal by working with our small weekly groups, I think I would have loved the opportunity to develop and research a topic of my own individual choosing. I wonder if there is a way to include more individual study. I would also have benefited more from the reflection journal if it were a more formal part of the class. I tried to keep up with it, but it fell by the wayside in

week 3 because the group project that week was time consuming, and I never got a chance to get back to it!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Megan and the rest of the Amherst team made everything so comfortable and easy for us. The housing arrangements were lovely, and the gentleman from Facilities who cleaned our dorm every day deserves an extra-special thank you for keeping our house so neat and clean. The library was wonderful and a close walk, and all other facilities exceeded my expectations! My entire experience here was so pleasant and worry-free.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

As mentioned before, allowing for independent work rather than group work. Also, the room where we met was pretty small; though convenient to our dorm and Austin's office, the table didn't fit all of us with our notebooks and laptops. I wonder if it would be better to have the seminar meet in a room with a larger table next year.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13753

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was an excellent program where Austin Sarat modeled the importance of reading closely, questioning beliefs, challenging his students to think deeply, and caring about his students' experiences in the course. It was wonderful to be a student again when all the readings were masterfully addressed in class and were thought provoking in their own right. I hope to work to bring out every voice in my classroom; Austin did that so well this summer.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat did a wonderful job designing this NEH Seminar to draw from a range of disciplines that incorporated law, literature, film, and journalism in a way that engaged the history and English teachers in the class. Amherst was a beautiful place to study and the campus was open to us - the gym and library were great facilities, and the dorm is spacious and well-maintained. The group gathered here was excellent, as everyone did the readings and came to class excited to be engaged in the discussions that day. Austin's charisma, humor, and unrivaled dedication to his work kept me (and my classmates) laughing and engrossed in the topics for each 2 1/2 hour session. Megan Estes was so efficient with email and making sure all details ran smoothly once we were in the dorms and class was in session. I am very impressed.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Fantastic - everything was available to us from the streaming videos to library facilities, wireless internet, great housing, etc. Amherst did a wonderful job on all accounts and responded to little issues

with urgency and immediacy that went far beyond my expectations.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I think requiring a journal or more writing would be useful. I took plenty of notes during the time here, but more time dedicated to reflection after the thought-provoking sessions would be useful for me. Without the requirement, it was easy to not prioritize writing regularly.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13757

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I have learned a tremendous deal about our society and its basis for punishing, and how culture and politics plays into it. I now have a much more firm understanding over the role the Supreme Court has played in landmark decisions and the heart of the matters involving them (rather than soundbites we are accustomed to hearing). Furthermore, I not only received an intense academic understanding of the issues but was fortunate to have a diverse group of colleagues that provided interesting insight into their own beliefs and opinions over the matters.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat was an incredibly hospitable individual who made us feel welcome from the get go (including helping us carry luggage, etc). In our seminar, his wealth of knowledge was very impressive and paralleled only by his enthusiasm for teaching it. While many of the assignments were difficult or hard to relate to at first, Mr. Sarat had an excellent way of making connections between them and cases we are familiar with, and used interesting and thought provoking hypotheticals that kept us on our toes and provided a constant challenge to always have a basis for our views.

Outside of the seminar we had weekly group social outings (bowling, mini golf) which allowed us to bond as a group (including Mr. Sarat) so during our meetings we were all at easy with each other and had very healthy and open discussions and debates over topics.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was incredibly accommodating and provided a very comfortable home for us. The Charles Drew House is a mansion converted to a dorm which is quaint in size but provides all of the amenities we needed. The library was often available, and when it was closed for repairs they acted quickly to make sure we had a computer available in the dorm for our use. The library had a tremendous amount of resources.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would like to have one or two guest speakers that may have experience in a few of the issues we looked at. Coming from a historical background, I wish we could have delved deeper into that aspect but there were many people from an English background so overall it was pretty well balanced.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I hope to apply for some regarding the Abolitionist movement. I would also like to see one examining the relationships between state legislatures and the federal government.

Evaluation # 13765

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My experience was deeply engaging intellectually. Exploring the ethical, legal, and moral dimensions of punishment and how they are expressed through literature and film taught me not only about the history of punishment, particularly regarding the death penalty, but also ways that disciplines beyond my own can find expression in literature. I am especially interested in the interdisciplinary connections between law and literature, and I hope to develop a course for my high school students that explore this relationship.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director, Austin Sarat, is brilliant, very well read, and sensitive to the most subtle nuances in a text. His design of the seminar allowed us to become comfortable with the main ideas of the course as we built our skill reading legal decisions and applying the abstract ideas underpinning those decisions to other texts that we read and we looked at. Austin also genuinely sought feedback from the students throughout the seminar and implemented changes to respond to our suggestions. My colleagues were an interesting group of people. Though I had hoped for a greater diversity of political opinion from my colleagues, I was very pleased with the diversity of their modes of thinking about problems. I learned new ways of approaching problems and had to sharpen my thinking in response to the ideas offered by my colleagues. The group projects, though time consuming, resulted in very interesting class meetings, and it was fascinating to see how my colleagues applied the ideas of the course.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College could not have been more hospitable, largely due to the expert care Austin's assistant, Megan Estes, took of us. Even the smallest problem was taken care of immediately.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I have two suggestions for improvement. One is to provide more time for the collaborative projects. Between the heavy reading load and the short timetable for collaboration, project work was often stressful and, perhaps, not as careful as it might have been with more time. The other is to foster more conversations between the students. Austin wanted to cultivate a seminar culture in which the students interacted with each other, but because he was the one asking questions, often of individual students, most contributions were offered to him in response rather than to fellow students. One concrete suggestion is offer the opening problem to the entire class at once rather than to individuals in the class. Instead of asking each seminarian his or her thoughts on a problem individually, Austin would offer the problem to the class to figure out and then stay out of the discussion for a while as the class grappled with the problem itself with the differences of opinion driving deepening understanding.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with

contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13772

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

"Punishment, Politics, and Culture" was one of the most worthwhile seminars that I have ever been a part of. This was a truly transformative experience and my only regret is that it went by so fast. I was with an amazing group of educators, I have been challenged in my thinking in the best possible of ways, and Austin Sarat is a supreme educator and guide. This course was so well-planned, thought out, prepared, and executed that that is also what I will be taking back with me to my classroom. The essential questions posed for each class and the readings that we did were seamless and ones that I hope to take with me into my own practice and the fair, diplomatic and accountable way discussions were held will also follow me to my teaching.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Prof. Sarat's approach to teaching is inspiring and his direct, thought-provoking questions and analysis made me think about the topics we were discussing as well as learning in general. This seminar was finely crafted and honed and it sort of makes my head spin at how well it was put together and organized. There was a freedom in letting us be us while also Prof. Sarat kept us on track, on topic, and thinking. The discussions were rigorous and engaging. My colleagues were top-notch. I only wish that I could mimic all of this in other arenas in my life. I can't say enough in support and praise of this seminar.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everything was impeccable. Amherst College was an incredible institution to be a part of for these five weeks and every accommodation possible was made for us. The housing was comfortable and allowed for socializing, cooking and working. We had access with ease to everything and was perfectly located. I am sad to leave.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13777

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar was one of the greatest academic experiences I've had. The structure of the class has made me determined to incorporate more Socratic questioning into my own classroom, and the content has made me realize how many issues one can bring up when they combine literature and law. At the very

least, I'm going to have a lot more trials in my classes from here on out.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I suspect that putting a bunch of college graduates in a situation where they have a single class and the time to do all the reading makes it automatically deeper and more rewarding than any undergraduate or graduate course. Austin was an AMAZING facilitator and teacher, his topics were always pertinent and fascinating, and my colleagues never stopped being engaged, critical partners.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Excellent in all regards. I lived off-campus, so I had less interaction with Amherst College than my colleagues did, but the library (when it was open) was excellent, and the housing arrangement had a nice area for communal movie watching, etc.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13648

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This is, without question, the best summer program I have done in fifteen years. Austin is an intellectual--a consummate professional whose commitment to classroom excellence made every single class rich and stimulating. The coursework will set the foundation for a class on politics and punishment at the school where I teach.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Perhaps part of Austin's genius is his ability to select good teachers. He brought together a collection of outstanding men and women--newbies and veterans alike--each of whom delved into the readings, contributed keen insights to the seminar, and remained cohesive throughout. The reading was an eclectic mix of literature, allegory, law, political science, sociology, psychology, and philosophy--all of it valuable. Thankfully, Austin showed sincere respect for our time and professionalism. Other summer programs, sadly, emphasize mindless lesson plans. Not here. Austin negotiated us through difficult concepts, listening carefully to our contributions, and utilizing our analyses to generate sound, thought-provoking questions. Who among us will forget his "tingles" or his sharp wit? This program is, without question, a product of Austin's careful attention to detail, his vast experience with the subject, and his sharp intellect. I am very grateful.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was the perfect host.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

There is always room for improvement, no? But here's the thing, Austin met with all of us regularly to ensure that our needs were being met. Were there small things that needed to be tweaked--yes, but Austin's unselfish, caring approach put his students' needs first. Consequently, I'm not sure there is anything big I would improve.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Michael Sandel--Ethics He is a beloved Harvard professor whose book, Justice, has sold millions of copies.

Evaluation # 13828

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I entered this experience without too many convictions about the subject. I thoroughly enjoyed discovering my own views on punishment, the death penalty and law through this course. My intellectual development aside, this experience helped reinvigorate my teaching. Austin had a lot to say about the endeavor of teaching and how inspiring it can be. He helped me remember how much imagination is possible in a classroom. I hope to bring more nonfiction into my classroom and our readings this summer will definitely help me do that.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The colleagues were generally respectful and willing to work together. The discussions were lively and incredibly intellectually engaging. I thought there was a nice progression to the course.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The host institution was incredible. The facilities were clean, everyone was very nice and we had everything we needed. I was completely comfortable while I was in Amherst.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I wish we had not finished the course with Eichmann in Jerusalem. I think Beloved brought a more fruitful conversation and would have been a stronger final text.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13901

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

"Punishment, Politics and Culture" was a seminar in critical thinking...or what I called "thinking boot camp." Heavy on the reading, though the reading was thoughtfully selected. Professor Sarat ("Austin") did an excellent job linking one reading to the other and the connections were on-going throughout our

seminar experience. I would absolutely recommend this seminar for humanities teachers...and for the general US population! I would add that the people who tend to apply to this seminar take it very seriously. It was such a pleasure to be with such intelligent, motivated, and interesting/interested (in all things!) people. Great group!

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

"Austin" possesses a passion for his craft - the art of teaching and thinking. Amherst College is a rigorous academic environment and, at times, there is slight undergraduate feel to the seminar. His agenda is clear and he welcomes a challenge, though cautiously. That said, there is no question that Austin has high regard for teachers (public, private, what have you) and enjoys engaging us in discussion. He appreciates our perspective and wants us to go back into the field with the thinking tools to challenge our students.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is as beautiful as you may have guessed. The seminar room was comfortable and a great place to sit and discuss all we read. Austin's assistant is VERY helpful, doing whatever she can to make you feel more comfortable. The tough part was that the dorm rooms have no AC, which was fine until a devastating heat wave forced the NEH participants to pile into the one air-conditioned room of the Drew dorm at night (which was actually fun!). Finally, you have access to a fabulous library with any amenity you can think of! There are lots of public buses if you do not have a car with you, though anything off the bus line is tough to get to. If you can, bring a car! There are many great sites to see in driving distance.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

- perhaps more thought into the goal/objective of the weekly projects (not saying they need to be super-structured)
- more time during each seminar day to challenge each other's ideas
- perhaps required reading BEFORE arrival: e.g. specific articles of the U.S. Constitution - Preamble, 8th, 14th, etc., perhaps some prep readings to help those without a history background understand context and history of capital punishment, specific court cases ahead of time to allow for more comparison and contrast. Many of the selected texts required a 2nd reading - at least.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would love to see a seminar on international law and/or international restorative justice!

Bravo NEH - a summer absolutely well-spent!

Evaluation # 13948

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I had a very rewarding experience participating in this seminar, both in the richness of the content and in the stimulating way it was conducted. Not only will coverage of the topics impact future course

content in my classes, but it will also impact how I interact with my students.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin made every day very stimulating using a variety of techniques to engage us. He would employ hypotheticals related to the readings, use humor, exercises, Q&A via the Socratic method, and make connections to previous material. He also used a solid mix of materials including court cases, novels, short stories, films and more to help convey ideas and flesh out understanding of the material. Every class was student-centered and featured healthy and thought-provoking discussions about a variety of concepts related to punishment and politics. We also augmented our understanding of the material by applying the seminar concepts into weekly group projects and presentations on topics of our own choosing.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The host institution was very welcoming from start to finish. The housing was right across the street from the classroom where we met, and every day Austin checked in regarding any issues pertaining to our needs and comfort. The location also made for easy access to library and dining facilities. We even got additional computer resources after renovations at the library limited access to its computer lab. It was quite easy to get access to the Internet, books, documents, printing, and video screening equipment.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 13952

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The effect this seminar had on my scholarship is difficult to measure at this point. I relished class time every day, another chance to spend a few hours sitting around and talking to a remarkably sharp group of individuals, led by an even sharper one. There is no direct impact between the course and my teaching (i.e. I won't teach any of the texts we read with my students), but a deeper understanding of the place of punishment in our society necessarily will influence my instruction in American Literature.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was phenomenal. His energy never ceased to motivate us. It was clear that he cared a great deal about the subject matter and has dedicated his life to helping others understand it.

He also did a phenomenal job choosing the participants for the seminar. The group maintained an intellectual focus that is unparalleled to any educational setting I've ever been in.

Most impressive, though, was Austin's true dedication to and palpable affection toward the group. We

all wanted to be there every day because this attitude was contagious.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Housing was nice, new, and clean. The full access the library granted us enormously aided our endeavors. Having a computer installing in the building for the last weeks actually wound up being a wonderful plus!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Don't print so much!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 14286

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This experience has refreshed my life long love of learning, while renewing my excitement about returning to my classroom for a new school year. It was a wonderful experience that challenged me as a student and excited me as an educator.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was amazing. His passion for the topic is evident. He is open to discussion and willing to continue learning about a topic on which he is clearly an expert. He allowed everyone's voice to be heard during class and valued differing opinions. He genuinely cares about his students and was so kind in every interaction. His passion for teaching has energized me as I return to my classroom.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The Drew House Dorm was incredible. Beautiful rooms, nice kitchen, and air conditioned common room. Fans were provided for our rooms. Megan was always so kind about responding to any of our needs. When the library closed for reovations,a computer and printer were promptly set up in our house. Everything in town is within walking distance. Lovely, quaint place with a welcoming atmosphere. I miss it already!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Everything was wonderful!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

2010 EVALUATIONS

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES****Workshop Evaluations**


Punishment, Politics, and Culture

Number of evaluations: 16

Evaluation # 11309

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This has been an amazing experience. Dr. Sarat's enthusiasm for his subject is engaging and by the second week I was writing a list of ideas for my classroom. The intensity of this experience is a bit overwhelming, but in a great way, like an academic thought camp immersion program. I wish I could go through the process again with additional readings and discussion.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Dr. Sarat is an amazing leader by example. I particularly like the opening scenario question, which teaches us how to think. I was pleasantly surprised that each of the nine presentations were so varied and worthwhile.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.


facilities were fine; air-conditioning, or the lack thereof, was exhausting, but appreciate the fans provided

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?


a seminar table sized to fit all participants

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11318


Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This NEH seminar has changed me both personally and professionally. I appreciated the content, as it forced me to look closely at my beliefs and



philosophies about punishment and decide if I was still comfortable with my beliefs. This, to me, is the hallmark of excellent teaching, and while it will be difficult to replicate the teaching style I saw here, I plan to find a way to implement similar strategies within my own teaching style. My seminar materials are marked up with notes to myself about what pieces I'd like to use with my own classes, or questions I want to ask my own students. The effects of this seminar will also extend to my colleagues, as I've been in contact with them throughout the summer as ideas come to me. In terms of scholarship, the most significant factor is my colleagues here. Each is highly motivated and is not satisfied with being an 8 AM-3 PM kind of teacher. These people are dedicated professionals, either currently working on advanced degrees or making plans for further professional development, and we all seem to take very seriously the art and craft of teaching. I am leaving this seminar with a renewed resolve to pursue a meaningful 2nd master's degree (not the diploma mill kind that many teachers opt for), to continue in my research endeavors that I've held on to since grad school, and to even begin work on writing a book. All lofty goals, I know, but associating with Austin and my fellow seminar attendees have empowered me quite a bit.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.




I'm not sure I can describe my feelings toward the program director without being accused of hyperbole. He is relentless yet merciful during discussion. He is kind. He has incredibly high expectations, but is so personable and invested in our experience, that the thought of arriving unprepared to a session was horrifying to me. I didn't want to disappoint him. He is committed to building a community--from the manner in which he facilitated class discussion to our other group activities. He wants everyone to feel as invested in the material and each other as he is. The topic, to be honest, began to weigh heavily on me after a while. But I was prepared for that to happen, and to be honest, it gave me new found respect for people who choose a career in law and law enforcement. I thought I had bad days as a teacher; my bad days can't possibly compare to a judge or jury member with sentencing responsibilities.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is an incredible place to have an NEH seminar. Before I left home, a friend told me that I wouldn't want to leave Amherst, and he was right. I felt completely safe while here, and every possible need was met. The housing was quite nice for a dorm situation, and while I tended to stay at the dorm or go to a restaurant to work, I know the library's resources were ample and available. I really appreciated having gym access while here.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?



I wish I did--but as this was my first NEH seminar, I have nothing to compare it to. I almost am afraid to apply for another seminar because a different setting couldn't possibly be better than what I've experienced here. I do plan to apply again, but Austin and Amherst College have set quite the standard for my future expectations.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

With a increased focus on technology and media studies across the curriculum, I would love to see a seminar focused on media/cultural studies.

Evaluation # 11287

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Punishment is a topic of substantial interest to students in my government and politics courses. Prior to the seminar I had few reference points from which to facilitate discussions and develop assignments relative to punishment. I now have a wide variety of ideas for my classroom, and already have developed some curriculum materials. Aside from the engaging readings and seminar discussions, I was deeply affected by Professor Sarat's seminar method. He started each seminar with a hypothetical question, almost unanswerable, about the major theme of the readings. Then he posed additional questions and dilemmas that deepened my understanding of the concepts/ideas in the readings. I often left the seminar room shaking my head at the complexity of the topics of punishment, pain, guilt, vengeance, justice, prisons, the death penalty, mercy, etc. The experience as a whole was intellectually rigorous, but refreshing, and its impact on my pedagogy will prove wide and deep.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Please see above. Additionally, I congratulate Professor Sarat and the NEH for assembling a set of seminar colleagues with genuine interest in the topic and the ability and energy to examine the texts closely/seriously. The Thursday group projects were a great idea in that they helped us get to know each other; the group presentation topics were diverse and interesting, and they may prove helpful in developing classroom materials. The book being assembled based on the presentations is an excellent idea.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The primary faces of the "host institution" were Professor Sarat and Megan Estes Ryan. Professor Sarat started the seminar not at June's opening night dinner, but rather with a personal phone call in April to offer each of us a spot in the seminar. From that point in time until the start of the seminar he frequently emailed articles about punishment. During our five-week seminar, he met with us individually on several occasions to discuss how "things were going," and to offer help. He emailed us on a frequent basis with logistical information, relevant articles, and questions to guide our readings. His demeanor was always one of an intelligent, inquisitive, helpful, organized, respectful and sometimes playful sage. I have never met anyone like him. Megan Estes Ryan was Professor Sarat's "right arm" on all

important housing, library, computer, etc. issues. I found her impeccable professionalism and attention to detail impressive. She sent us reminders, responded to any needs and concerns we had, and generally took care of the important "background" stuff so that we could grow our minds for five weeks. She's the best. Housing was fine and the incredible heat wave we had (100 degrees one day) was abated a bit by the fans Megan provided. The group area downstairs was air conditioned, and that was good. Everything was clean and well taken care of in Drew House, our housing unit. It was located across from the seminar room in Clarke, so one could leave their room and be in the seminar in a couple of minutes. Drew House was very close to restaurants and attractions (such as the Dickinson House a few blocks away). The library was simply excellent and the orientation was very helpful. The cafeteria food was ordinary and sometime crowded with kids from a variety of camps. Most people ate food prepared in the Drew kitchen and/or ate in local restaurants. The fitness center was more than adequate, and there are many places to walk and run on and near campus. An extensive trail system can be accessed from the College. The campus itself is impressive in size and points of interest. I give Amherst College an "A" for taking care of me so I could get the most out of the seminar and interact productively with my colleagues.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Honestly, none.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I wish there was a seminar, institute, or workshop on the topic of "Illegal Immigration in the U.S.: a Historical, Political, Legal, and Administrative Examination."

Evaluation # 11372

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was one of true collegiality and the seminar was taught using the Socratic Method. I was intellectually challenged daily and the readings were provocative, informative, and emotional. I hope this seminar will assist me in using a more positive, Socratic method in my own class and I know it has assisted in enlightening me in many intellectual and personal ways. Dr. Sarat has inspired me to continue my intellectual, as well as artistic endeavors.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The seminar had the perfect mix of individual and group work and I truly loved the use of so many types of media (court cases, novels, articles, movies, and readings of major thinkers in the fields of law, sociology, and philosophy. Dr. Sarat is a truly positive facilitator who using questioning to probe and get to the heart of the matter. He is always making connections between the different readings, etc. and

asks us to do the same. Additionally, Dr. Sarat brings his contagious passion for the subject into the room and inspires us to be great thinkers.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was extremely welcoming. They extended library hours specifically for our seminar and gave us full use of their facilities, including wireless internet; library services for not only their library, but also for the other four colleges/universities in the area; use of computer lab; use of pool and gym facilities; and housed all of us in Drew House, which is a small dorm with single rooms. They provided fans and some supplies for the kitchen and Megan Estes and Dr. Sarat checked with us weekly/daily to see if there was anything they could do to make our stay more comfortable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None at this time. This was truly a wonderful learning experience that inspired and challenged me to be a better scholar and to live out my dream, just as Dr. Sarat is doing with his teaching at Amherst.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11338

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was the best workshop I have taken. Professor Sarat was engaging, funny and very helpful in making the experience meaningful and thought-provoking.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The curriculum was wonderful. Readings and films were interwoven effectively. The material was very challenging.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The staff was excellent. Dorms were clean and well-furnished, although a little hot on some days without A/C in the rooms.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

a dorm w/ air conditioning

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).




Evaluation # 11395

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My chief emotion as I write this evaluation is gratitude. This Seminar has been one of the best experiences of my life. In every way, our discussions and activities have modeled what I would like to achieve in my classroom. I am returning to my teaching life with a renewed sense of vigor and focus. Specifically, I hope to model the techniques of Prof. Sarat. He made us all feel safe and validated in the strange, new world of constitutional law. He encouraged us to look at each case from all possible angles. At no point did he try to steer the conversation to some desired end. Our reading materials and discussions were designed to show the beauty and complexity and complexity of the law. Prof. Sarat's Socratic techniques would seem to be highly applicable to my subject (literature). I intend to implement a notebook full of changes to my approach to teaching.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.




Despite his encyclopedic knowledge and his lightning quick intelligence, he always displayed a rare, gentlemanly kindness. His approach brought out the best in all of us. He combined a savant's knowledge of his topic with the zeal of a recent convert. At no point of the seminar, however, did he come off as pedantic. He had a boyish enthusiasm that infected us all with a curiosity for this topic. He allowed us all to have a voice this summer. In fact, he insisted that we all struggle with the difficult concepts in our reading. As a fan of American literature, perhaps the highest complement I can pay Prof. Sarat is to say that he is a "Mockingbird." Like the eponymous figure from Harper Lee's novel, Prof. Sarat "sang his heart out" for us this summer. He brought beauty into all of our lives and made us better people and scholars by being in his presence.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I lived off campus and so the housing questions do not apply to my case. The library and computer facilities were very adequate for our needs.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).



I think that Prof. Larry Inchausti at Cal Poly, SLO would be an amazing director of a Seminar on Fyodor Dostoevsky or Thomas Merton. Also, Prof. Clay Carson of Stanford's Martin Luther King Center would be an excellent person to host a Seminar or Institute on the evolution of the Civil Rights Movement.




Evaluation # 11280

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was one of the most incredible academic experiences in my life. It will surely fulfill one of the objectives of the seminar program, which was to provide intellectual stimulation. I am surely inspired to continually pursue the topic of punishment over the years, but the course has taught me a larger understanding of learning and teaching. Austin's socratic, humanistic approach to teaching has been a great influence. I have learned to look at legal topics in a much deeper manner than previously.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.



What can I say. This was the best. Austin is truly one of the most gifted teachers I have ever had. He has so many tricks up his sleeve to motivate his students to push the boundaries of their beliefs and understanding on an issue. He has a great sense of humor and empathy. His understanding of the scholarship in his field is without peer. Each class was a joy. I especially enjoyed the opportunity to put together lessons on Thursdays. Finally, he did a superior job of picking the participants. We were a well-oiled machine. Each person added amazing talents and insight to the group. There were no clashes or conflicts which are usually present in such an endeavor as this.


Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was a great place to spend the summer. It was very comfortable, typical New England setting. It was beautiful, yet there were many things to do, such as going to Boston, Maine, hiking, camping, etc... Actually, one of the reasons I picked this seminar was that I thought it would be cheaper and more pleasant to spend 5 weeks in a place like Amherst than in a crowded city. Amherst has a great library, athletic facilities, beautiful renovated dorm rooms, 8 mile walking/biking path, etc...

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None. What more could I possibly ask for?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).



Evaluation # 11281

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

As an American Literature teacher, I have been so inspired and challenged by this course. I'm always looking for new windows into texts, and this course has provided me with more than I could have ever imagined. It's late July, and I'm already looking forward to the start of the school year so that I can talk to my students about the issues we've explored in this seminar. As cheesy as it sounds, this course has enriched my understanding of the American experience. Before taking this course, I never considered who and how and why we punish to be particularly relevant to my teaching, but I signed up for this course because I could see the potential. I'm glad that I did. Now it's hard to imagine how I ever taught American literature without including discussions of American penology. It's a wonderful problem to leave an experience like this excited, and almost a bit overwhelmed, by all of the different possibilities you see before you. I leave here refreshed, reinvigorated, and resolved to continue to explore these topics with my students, and on my own. Thank you for such an amazing experience!

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is brilliant without being arrogant. He is passionate without being dogmatic. He is clearly still very much in love with his field of study, and his enthusiasm is incredibly contagious. Austin is one of the funniest and warmest people that you'll ever meet, and sharing a classroom with him has been one of the highlights of my academic career. He has inspired me as a teacher, and challenged me as a student. Every session added a new and complex wrinkle, and I found myself pondering Austin's excellent questions long after we'd dispersed for the day. I couldn't have asked for a better instructor. He's also a wicked good bowler. The readings for this course were challenging, but perfectly spaced out. I think we all felt like we had enough time to complete the readings each week. Each day in seminar we'd begin with a scenario, and then slowly move towards discussing the articles for the day. Every class was a great mixing of theory and practice. The readings were a nice mix of law, literature, and theory, and our discussions were always lively and fascinating. Austin was not the sage on stage. He was the facilitator, making sure that everyone had a chance to speak, and guiding us through some rather challenging texts, but when his expertise was required, he would add a new perspective or a new layer of understanding to our conversations.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The campus is wonderful. The facilities are excellent. We were treated with the utmost respect, and any problems were quickly addressed. Everyone was very welcoming, and we were all encouraged to make the most of our time here at Amherst. I think we all felt like we were part of this learning community.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would suggest trying to negotiate a better deal at the dining hall. Most of us only ate there once or twice because it was so expensive, and there were other similarly priced options in the town. It certainly would have been convenient to have more meals there, but given what faculty and students pay to eat there, it seemed like we were being taken advantage of. Also, it would have been nice if the pool hours

didn't fall during class time. Some hours to swim in the morning would have been great. Lastly, the length of the seminar is pretty intense. Perhaps a 4 week option is possible? Of course, that raises the question of what material to cut, and having enjoyed it all, I'm not sure I'd want to make that call.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I'd love to see a course on 19th Century American literature that would benefit both Social Studies and English teachers. Chris Hager, who teaches at Trinity College in Hartford, CT, would be an excellent NEH leader. He may not yet be as established as some of the current directors, but he's a rising academic star, and is well respected by his peers, and loved by his students. I think he'd be an excellent director, even if my friendship with him disqualifies me from ever taking his course. Here's a link to his faculty profile: <http://internet2.trincoll.edu/facProfiles/Default.aspx?fid=1310838>

Evaluation # 11304

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This NEH Seminar was a tremendous opportunity to improve myself academically and professionally. The breadth of reading material and the depth of topics that Dr. Sarat chose to explore was both challenging and engaging. This multidisciplinary approach will transfer to the creation of my own classes.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat made this seminar the fantastic event that it became. He is an exemplary program director, teacher, and friend. The topic is applicable across disciplines and units of study.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College seems to have gone above and beyond in supporting the seminar participants. We were housed on campus, granted extended library hours, and offered full access to all campus facilities.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Study of Narrative Structures/Narratology - David Herman, Ohio State University


Evaluation # 11484



Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.


The past five weeks were the embodiment of the intellectual inquiry that should be the model for education in this country. The seminar offered stimulating material, a format for dialogue amongst bright, diverse, intellectually curious individuals and was facilitated by Professor Sarat in a way in which each individual's voice was recognized, encouraged and respected. Each day challenged my own thinking and forced me to consider new ideas, develop my own analytical skills and created an environment of learning which offered intellectual growth and continual challenge. The seminar has served as a model of intellectual inquiry and dialogue to which I will aspire as a teacher. In terms of my own scholarship, the seminar has offered a beginning foundation for building curriculum around concepts of law and justice in our society and I will further develop these ideas in a comparative global context.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.



Professor Sarat was one of the most brilliant professors with whom I have ever had the honor of working. His ideas, style of teaching (Socratic questioning, deliberative dialogue, challenging materials offering multiple perspectives) and continual development of a learning environment in which all students are participants and offered ongoing opportunities to engage the materials, develop ideas with depth and build on one's own, ideas from the ideas of the other participants in the seminar, was a model for the educative experience I would like to be able to offer my own student and a gift for my own personal intellectual development. The other participants were incredibly bright, diverse in their interests and academic backgrounds and offered an amazing depth to the daily seminar discussions. The weekly small group presentations/lessons developed by participants of the seminar, building upon an idea, theme or topic of the week, offered a collaborative learning opportunity whereby theory, analysis, and inquiry was translated from the abstract to practical application (with potential application within the classroom). For me, the seminar format (daily discussion-based engagement with materials and ideas) was the type of intellectual engagement which allowed for a type of intellectual growth seldom achieved through lecture. Everyday I was challenged to contextualize my thinking, analyze diverse perspectives, synthesize a complex breadth of materials and ideas, while simultaneously developing, clarifying and supporting my own ideas. This seminar was an intellectual gift, which far surpassed my expectations. My only regret is that it ended far too soon; I will miss the incredibly rich intellectually stimulating environment when I leave.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.



Amherst was an amazingly welcoming institution from the moment of my arrival. The housing at Drew House was great, the library facilities and staff were fabulous, as were the computer facilities. It was wonderful to have evening hours at the library throughout the week.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

In all honesty, there is nothing that I would change. This seminar was truly a perfect experience, on all levels - brilliant intellectual challenge, combined with collegiality, a beautiful environment and a welcoming community.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would be honored to participate in any seminar that Professor Sarat developed within the realm of his areas of expertise in law, jurisprudence and social thought. One topic which I would be interested in exploring further would be a comparative study of global systems of law, jurisprudence and punishment - examining the connections between morality and law within a global context.

Evaluation # 11369

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was a fantastic experience! It was great to work with colleagues from across the country and share knowledge and approaches to teaching. The subject matter will help me be a more well-rounded English teacher, particularly in the area of American literature.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The readings were diverse and interesting and the director was knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All of the facilities were great. The dorm was centrally located and had an air conditioned social room, which was very important.


Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11373

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.



The seminar with Prof. Sarat was challenging, stimulating, and exciting. An incredible educational experience. I will benefit from the teaching techniques I learned from the other teachers, my understanding of punishment, and my confidence in myself as an educator.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Prof. Sarat is superb at leading a discussion and directing thoughts. I was amazed at how he was able to focus the entire group on a topic and then steer conversation towards class topics. The other participants in the group were excellent as well, and I learned considerable pedagogy on the days that the participants directed the classes.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The library and computer facilities at Amherst were modern, accessible, and very comfortable. I did not stay on campus and cannot comment on the housing. The campus is breathtaking.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Make it longer. The experience was thrilling.




(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11382

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar exceeded my expectations. The experience challenged all preconceived ideas I had on the topic and compelled me to look at issues from every possible perspective. Austin Sarat's seminar methodology for exploring ideas is one I will use in my classroom to engage students and to teach critical thinking skills.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.



I am in awe of Professor Austin Sarat's wealth of knowledge and of the brilliance of my colleagues. Parsing the reading material was often very difficult, but Austin's Socratic method of inquiry made the material comprehensible. I wanted to be intellectually challenged this summer, and wanted the time and space to think; I was not disappointed. This seminar has been like a spa for the mind.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality,

housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Austin and his assistant Megan couldn't have been more hospitable. Every detail of our stay was of taken care of. From the moment I received a phone call from Austin informing me that I was accepted, it was apparent that he was sincerely welcoming me into the program. Megan and Austin were in frequent email contact with the participants for three months before we arrived. Once we were here, they already seemed like old friends. Amherst College is the perfect location for this program: its facilities are outstanding, especially the library. The dorm was conveniently located near the seminar meeting location, dining facilities, and the center of town. This was particularly important for those of us without cars this summer.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Not one.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Dr. Kevin Kolbeck is an Instructor at Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, CA. He is also an expert on the life and literature of Flannery O'Connor. I've attended his summer seminar on O'Connor's writings, which he has twice offered for friends, students and colleagues. I think this would make an excellent NEH Seminar. His email is kkolbeck@thomasaquinas.edu

Evaluation # 11538

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Excellent. It was an intellectual workout--invigorating and energizing. It was a model for how to conduct a seminar. Among its inspiring features were a challenging curriculum with varied texts (literature, sociology, law, philosophy, film); Dr. Sarat, a very knowledgeable and engaging seminar leader; and responsive seminar participants.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Director--Although Dr. Sarat has a playful approach as a teacher, it was clear to all that he works very hard at what he does and this was inspirational to many. In addition, he was solicitous of student concerns and met with each of us individually through the course. He provided challenging readings and presentations. His introduction of topics by hypothetical factual situations got the group going; polling everyone around the table kept everyone engaged, as well as giving the group a sense of the range of opinions on an issue. Colleagues--Colleagues were a diverse group of teachers eager to be intellectually challenged and to bring back the best features of the seminar into their own classrooms. Topics, organization, discussions and activities--Dr. Sarat has a deep knowledge of the topic of

punishment and its relationship to law, society and culture. The readings were well organized to probe the subject from many different points of views. Discussions were focused, stimulating and multi-layered. For many, weekly presentations by seminar participants provided some of the best models for what teacher workshops and professional development should look like. Teachers collaborated to creatively present and explore aspects of punishment--whether by having other seminar participants compare film clips, historical events, participate in mock trials or write poems. Participants were thus given a a voice to explore their own interests on the subject matter of the seminar.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is a wonderful place--leafy and green, aptly characterized by Dr. Sarat, the seminar leader, as the "State of Bliss." Among its blissful features are the rich resources of the air-conditioned, open-stacked library, to which we were granted library privileges, and the computer facilities. Dr. Sarat and Megan Estes, who helped administer the program, sought to make everyone's stay at the college a rewarding experience. Drew House, where we lived, is a beautiful, conveniently located house with lovely rooms; each participant had the privacy of his/her own room.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Air conditioning! The most difficult aspect of the experience was the unexpected heat wave. Dr. Sarat and Megan Estes did whatever they could to mitigate the reality that dormitories at Amherst are not air conditioned. They had airconditioners installed in the common room of Drew House and provided each room with fans. In addition, they informed us of airconditioned havens on campus.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11620

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The architecture of this seminar was crafted in such an intelligent, interdisciplinary manner that I was continually pushed to discover new ideas, insights, and revelations about our society, our government, and the foundation of our country. These revelations will not only effect my pedagogy and content as a teacher, but my doctoral work and my own personal reflections.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is one of the most masterful teachers I have never encountered. Learning from him is a gift. His ability to use a highly structured Socratic seminar as a forum for ideas and challenges, was not only engaging, it mimicked the

fundamental ideas at stake in our seminar discussion. the entire program was outstanding. It was an honor to work with such an outstanding scholar and human being.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All arrangements were above and beyond my expectations. They were fantastic.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

None.

Evaluation # 11775

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was extremely enriching. I believe it will help my teaching in that it provided new ways, through the lens of punishment and what it reveals about society and culture, to approach various topics in Classical, European and World History. It also provided a particularly useful framework for approaching issues of crime and attitudes towards the law for my course in Urban Studies as well. I have already begun reading the supplemental readings provided and suggested by the director for inclusion in future courses.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director was engaging, enthusiastic and extremely knowledgeable. I was especially impressed by his pedagogical techniques and will use them in my own classroom; I'm sure that they will get students thinking and participating in class discussions right from the start! The topics were fascinating, moving from the general to the particular, and there was an impressive thematic continuity running through the entire course. Discussions were always stimulating, and I enjoyed the opportunity to work with my colleagues in group projects, particularly since these activities have provided me with a wealth of ideas and lesson plans to use in my own courses!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was a wonderful host. The library was a fantastic resource, and the computer facilities were excellent. As I am a local resident, I did not need to live on campus.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No, I really think everything was great. I would have loved to go for another couple of weeks!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

National Endowment for the Humanities

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2010 EVALUATIONS

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Workshop Evaluations

Punishment, Politics, and Culture

Number of evaluations: 16

Evaluation # 11309

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This has been an amazing experience. Dr. Sarat's enthusiasm for his subject is engaging and by the second week I was writing a list of ideas for my classroom. The intensity of this experience is a bit overwhelming, but in a great way, like an academic thought camp immersion program. I wish I could go through the process again with additional readings and discussion.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Dr. Sarat is an amazing leader by example. I particularly like the opening scenario question, which teaches us how to think. I was pleasantly surprised that each of the nine presentations were so varied and worthwhile.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

facilities were fine; air-conditioning, or the lack thereof, was exhausting, but appreciate the fans provided

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

a seminar table sized to fit all participants

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11318

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This NEH seminar has changed me both personally and professionally. I appreciated the content, as it forced me to look closely at my beliefs and

philosophies about punishment and decide if I was still comfortable with my beliefs. This, to me, is the hallmark of excellent teaching, and while it will be difficult to replicate the teaching style I saw here, I plan to find a way to implement similar strategies within my own teaching style. My seminar materials are marked up with notes to myself about what pieces I'd like to use with my own classes, or questions I want to ask my own students. The effects of this seminar will also extend to my colleagues, as I've been in contact with them throughout the summer as ideas come to me. In terms of scholarship, the most significant factor is my colleagues here. Each is highly motivated and is not satisfied with being an 8 AM-3 PM kind of teacher. These people are dedicated professionals, either currently working on advanced degrees or making plans for further professional development, and we all seem to take very seriously the art and craft of teaching. I am leaving this seminar with a renewed resolve to pursue a meaningful 2nd master's degree (not the diploma mill kind that many teachers opt for), to continue in my research endeavors that I've held on to since grad school, and to even begin work on writing a book. All lofty goals, I know, but associating with Austin and my fellow seminar attendees have empowered me quite a bit.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I'm not sure I can describe my feelings toward the program director without being accused of hyperbole. He is relentless yet merciful during discussion. He is kind. He has incredibly high expectations, but is so personable and invested in our experience, that the thought of arriving unprepared to a session was horrifying to me. I didn't want to disappoint him. He is committed to building a community--from the manner in which he facilitated class discussion to our other group activities. He wants everyone to feel as invested in the material and each other as he is. The topic, to be honest, began to weigh heavily on me after a while. But I was prepared for that to happen, and to be honest, it gave me new found respect for people who choose a career in law and law enforcement. I thought I had bad days as a teacher; my bad days can't possibly compare to a judge or jury member with sentencing responsibilities.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is an incredible place to have an NEH seminar. Before I left home, a friend told me that I wouldn't want to leave Amherst, and he was right. I felt completely safe while here, and every possible need was met. The housing was quite nice for a dorm situation, and while I tended to stay at the dorm or go to a restaurant to work, I know the library's resources were ample and available. I really appreciated having gym access while here.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I wish I did--but as this was my first NEH seminar, I have nothing to compare it to. I almost am afraid to apply for another seminar because a different setting couldn't possibly be better than what I've experienced here. I do plan to apply again, but Austin and Amherst College have set quite the standard for my future expectations.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

With a increased focus on technology and media studies across the curriculum, I would love to see a seminar focused on media/cultural studies.

Evaluation # 11287

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Punishment is a topic of substantial interest to students in my government and politics courses. Prior to the seminar I had few reference points from which to facilitate discussions and develop assignments relative to punishment. I now have a wide variety of ideas for my classroom, and already have developed some curriculum materials. Aside from the engaging readings and seminar discussions, I was deeply affected by Professor Sarat's seminar method. He started each seminar with a hypothetical question, almost unanswerable, about the major theme of the readings. Then he posed additional questions and dilemmas that deepened my understanding of the concepts/ideas in the readings. I often left the seminar room shaking my head at the complexity of the topics of punishment, pain, guilt, vengeance, justice, prisons, the death penalty, mercy, etc. The experience as a whole was intellectually rigorous, but refreshing, and its impact on my pedagogy will prove wide and deep.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Please see above. Additionally, I congratulate Professor Sarat and the NEH for assembling a set of seminar colleagues with genuine interest in the topic and the ability and energy to examine the texts closely/seriously. The Thursday group projects were a great idea in that they helped us get to know each other; the group presentation topics were diverse and interesting, and they may prove helpful in developing classroom materials. The book being assembled based on the presentations is an excellent idea.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The primary faces of the "host institution" were Professor Sarat and Megan Estes Ryan. Professor Sarat started the seminar not at June's opening night dinner, but rather with a personal phone call in April to offer each of us a spot in the seminar. From that point in time until the start of the seminar he frequently emailed articles about punishment. During our five-week seminar, he met with us individually on several occasions to discuss how "things were going," and to offer help. He emailed us on a frequent basis with logistical information, relevant articles, and questions to guide our readings. His demeanor was always one of an intelligent, inquisitive, helpful, organized, respectful and sometimes playful sage. I have never met anyone like him. Megan Estes Ryan was Professor's Sarat's "right arm" on all

important housing, library, computer, etc. issues. I found her impeccable professionalism and attention to detail impressive. She sent us reminders, responded to any needs and concerns we had, and generally took care of the important "background" stuff so that we could grow our minds for five weeks. She's the best. Housing was fine and the incredible heat wave we had (100 degrees one day) was abated a bit by the fans Megan provided. The group area downstairs was air conditioned, and that was good. Everything was clean and well taken care of in Drew House, our housing unit. It was located across from the seminar room in Clarke, so one could leave their room and be in the seminar in a couple of minutes. Drew House was very close to restaurants and attractions (such as the Dickinson House a few blocks away). The library was simply excellent and the orientation was very helpful. The cafeteria food was ordinary and sometime crowded with kids from a variety of camps. Most people ate food prepared in the Drew kitchen and/or ate in local restaurants. The fitness center was more than adequate, and there are many places to walk and run on and near campus. An extensive trail system can be accessed from the College. The campus itself is impressive in size and points of interest. I give Amherst College an "A" for taking care of me so I could get the most out of the seminar and interact productively with my colleagues.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Honestly, none.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I wish there was a seminar, institute, or workshop on the topic of "Illegal Immigration in the U.S.: a Historical, Political, Legal, and Administrative Examination."

Evaluation # 11372

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was one of true collegiality and the seminar was taught using the Socratic Method. I was intellectually challenged daily and the readings were provocative, informative, and emotional. I hope this seminar will assist me in using a more positive, Socratic method in my own class and I know it has assisted in enlightening me in many intellectual and personal ways. Dr. Sarat has inspired me to continue my intellectual, as well as artistic endeavors.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The seminar had the perfect mix of individual and group work and I truly loved the use of so many types of media (court cases, novels, articles, movies, and readings of major thinkers in the fields of law, sociology, and philosophy. Dr. Sarat is a truly positive facilitator who using questioning to probe and get to the heart of the matter. He is always making connections between the different readings, etc. and

asks us to do the same. Additionally, Dr. Sarat brings his contagious passion for the subject into the room and inspires us to be great thinkers.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was extremely welcoming. They extended library hours specifically for our seminar and gave us full use of their facilities, including wireless internet; library services for not only their library, but also for the other four colleges/universities in the area; use of computer lab; use of pool and gym facilities; and housed all of us in Drew House, which is a small dorm with single rooms. They provided fans and some supplies for the kitchen and Megan Estes and Dr. Sarat checked with us weekly/daily to see if there was anything they could do to make our stay more comfortable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None at this time. This was truly a wonderful learning experience that inspired and challenged me to be a better scholar and to live out my dream, just as Dr. Sarat is doing with his teaching at Amherst.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11338

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was the best workshop I have taken. Professor Sarat was engaging, funny and very helpful in making the experience meaningful and thought-provoking.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The curriculum was wonderful. Readings and films were interwoven effectively. The material was very challenging.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The staff was excellent. Dorms were clean and well-furnished, although a little hot on some days without A/C in the rooms.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

a dorm w/ air conditioning

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11395

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My chief emotion as I write this evaluation is gratitude. This Seminar has been one of the best experiences of my life. In every way, our discussions and activities have modeled what I would like to achieve in my classroom. I am returning to my teaching life with a renewed sense of vigor and focus. Specifically, I hope to model the techniques of Prof. Sarat. He made us all feel safe and validated in the strange, new world of constitutional law. He encouraged us to look at each case from all possible angles. At no point did he try to steer the conversation to some desired end. Our reading materials and discussions were designed to show the beauty and complexity and complexity of the law. Prof. Sarat's Socratic techniques would seem to be highly applicable to my subject (literature). I intend to implement a notebook full of changes to my approach to teaching.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Despite his encyclopedic knowledge and his lightning quick intelligence, he always displayed a rare, gentlemanly kindness. His approach brought out the best in all of us. He combined a savant's knowledge of his topic with the zeal of a recent convert. At no point of the seminar, however, did he come off as pedantic. He had a boyish enthusiasm that infected us all with a curiosity for this topic. He allowed us all to have a voice this summer. In fact, he insisted that we all struggle with the difficult concepts in our reading. As a fan of American literature, perhaps the highest complement I can pay Prof. Sarat is to say that he is a "Mockingbird." Like the eponymous figure from Harper Lee's novel, Prof. Sarat "sang his heart out" for us this summer. He brought beauty into all of our lives and made us better people and scholars by being in his presence.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I lived off campus and so the housing questions do not apply to my case. The library and computer facilities were very adequate for our needs.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I think that Prof. Larry Inchausti at Cal Poly, SLO would be an amazing director of a Seminar on Fyodor Dostoevsky or Thomas Merton. Also, Prof. Clay Carson of Stanford's Martin Luther King Center would be an excellent person to host a Seminar or Institute on the evolution of the Civil Rights Movement.

Evaluation # 11280

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was one of the most incredible academic experiences in my life. It will surely fulfill one of the objectives of the seminar program, which was to provide intellectual stimulation. I am surely inspired to continually pursue the topic of punishment over the years, but the course has taught me a larger understanding of learning and teaching. Austin's socratic, humanistic approach to teaching has been a great influence. I have learned to look at legal topics in a much deeper manner than previously.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

What can I say. This was the best. Austin is truly one of the most gifted teachers I have ever had. He has so many tricks up his sleeve to motivate his students to push the boundaries of their beliefs and understanding on an issue. He has a great sense of humor and empathy. His understanding of the scholarship in his field is without peer. Each class was a joy. I especially enjoyed the opportunity to put together lessons on Thursdays. Finally, he did a superior job of picking the participants. We were a well-oiled machine. Each person added amazing talents and insight to the group. There were no clashes or conflicts which are usually present in such an endeavor as this.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was a great place to spend the summer. It was very comfortable, typical New England setting. It was beautiful, yet there were many things to do, such as going to Boston, Maine, hiking, camping, etc... Actually, one of the reasons I picked this seminar was that I thought it would be cheaper and more pleasant to spend 5 weeks in a place like Amherst than in a crowded city. Amherst has a great library, athletic facilities, beautiful renovated dorm rooms, 8 mile walking/biking path, etc...

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None. What more could I possibly ask for?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11281

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

As an American Literature teacher, I have been so inspired and challenged by this course. I'm always looking for new windows into texts, and this course has provided me with more than I could have ever imagined. It's late July, and I'm already looking forward to the start of the school year so that I can talk to my students about the issues we've explored in this seminar. As cheesy as it sounds, this course has enriched my understanding of the American experience. Before taking this course, I never considered who and how and why we punish to be particularly relevant to my teaching, but I signed up for this course because I could see the potential. I'm glad that I did. Now it's hard to imagine how I ever taught American literature without including discussions of American penology. It's a wonderful problem to leave an experience like this excited, and almost a bit overwhelmed, by all of the different possibilities you see before you. I leave here refreshed, reinvigorated, and resolved to continue to explore these topics with my students, and on my own. Thank you for such an amazing experience!

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is brilliant without being arrogant. He is passionate without being dogmatic. He is clearly still very much in love with his field of study, and his enthusiasm is incredibly contagious. Austin is one of the funniest and warmest people that you'll ever meet, and sharing a classroom with him has been one of the highlights of my academic career. He has inspired me as a teacher, and challenged me as a student. Every session added a new and complex wrinkle, and I found myself pondering Austin's excellent questions long after we'd dispersed for the day. I couldn't have asked for a better instructor. He's also a wicked good bowler. The readings for this course were challenging, but perfectly spaced out. I think we all felt like we had enough time to complete the readings each week. Each day in seminar we'd begin with a scenario, and then slowly move towards discussing the articles for the day. Every class was a great mixing of theory and practice. The readings were a nice mix of law, literature, and theory, and our discussions were always lively and fascinating. Austin was not the sage on stage. He was the facilitator, making sure that everyone had a chance to speak, and guiding us through some rather challenging texts, but when his expertise was required, he would add a new perspective or a new layer of understanding to our conversations.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The campus is wonderful. The facilities are excellent. We were treated with the utmost respect, and any problems were quickly addressed. Everyone was very welcoming, and we were all encouraged to make the most of our time here at Amherst. I think we all felt like we were part of this learning community.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I would suggest trying to negotiate a better deal at the dining hall. Most of us only ate there once or twice because it was so expensive, and there were other similarly priced options in the town. It certainly would have been convenient to have more meals there, but given what faculty and students pay to eat there, it seemed like we were being taken advantage of. Also, it would have been nice if the pool hours

didn't fall during class time. Some hours to swim in the morning would have been great. Lastly, the length of the seminar is pretty intense. Perhaps a 4 week option is possible? Of course, that raises the question of what material to cut, and having enjoyed it all, I'm not sure I'd want to make that call.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I'd love to see a course on 19th Century American literature that would benefit both Social Studies and English teachers. Chris Hager, who teaches at Trinity College in Hartford, CT, would be an excellent NEH leader. He may not yet be as established as some of the current directors, but he's a rising academic star, and is well respected by his peers, and loved by his students. I think he'd be an excellent director, even if my friendship with him disqualifies me from ever taking his course. Here's a link to his faculty profile: <http://internet2.trincoll.edu/facProfiles/Default.aspx?fid=1310838>

Evaluation # 11304

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This NEH Seminar was a tremendous opportunity to improve myself academically and professionally. The breadth of reading material and the depth of topics that Dr. Sarat chose to explore was both challenging and engaging. This multidisciplinary approach will transfer to the creation of my own classes.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat made this seminar the fantastic event that it became. He is an exemplary program director, teacher, and friend. The topic is applicable across disciplines and units of study.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College seems to have gone above and beyond in supporting the seminar participants. We were housed on campus, granted extended library hours, and offered full access to all campus facilities.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Study of Narrative Structures/Narratology - David Herman, Ohio State University

Evaluation # 11484

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The past five weeks were the embodiment of the intellectual inquiry that should be the model for education in this country. The seminar offered stimulating material, a format for dialogue amongst bright, diverse, intellectually curious individuals and was facilitated by Professor Sarat in a way in which each individual's voice was recognized, encouraged and respected. Each day challenged my own thinking and forced me to consider new ideas, develop my own analytical skills and created an environment of learning which offered intellectual growth and continual challenge. The seminar has served as a model of intellectual inquiry and dialogue to which I will aspire as a teacher. In terms of my own scholarship, the seminar has offered a beginning foundation for building curriculum around concepts of law and justice in our society and I will further develop these ideas in a comparative global context.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Professor Sarat was one of the most brilliant professors with whom I have ever had the honor of working. His ideas, style of teaching (socratic questioning, deliberative dialogue, challenging materials offering multiple perspectives) and continual development of a learning environment in which all students are participants and offered ongoing opportunities to engage the materials, develop ideas with depth and build on one's own, ideas from the ideas of the other participants in the seminar, was a model for the educative experience I would like to be able to offer my own student and a gift for my own personal intellectual development. The other participants were incredibly bright, diverse in their interests and academic backgrounds and offered an amazing depth to the daily seminar discussions. The weekly small group presentations/lessons developed by participants of the seminar, building upon an idea, theme or topic of the week, offered a collaborative learning opportunity whereby theory, analysis, and inquiry was translated from the abstract to practical application (with potential application within the classroom). For me, the seminar format (daily discussion-based engagement with materials and ideas) was the type of intellectual engagement which allowed for a type of intellectual growth seldom achieved through lecture. Everyday I was challenged to contextualize my thinking, analyze diverse perspectives, synthesize a complex breadth of materials and ideas, while simultaneously developing, clarifying and supporting my own ideas. This seminar was an intellectual gift, which far surpassed my expectations. My only regret is that it ended far too soon; I will miss the incredibly rich intellectually stimulating environment when I leave.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was an amazingly welcoming institution from the moment of my arrival. The housing at Drew House was great, the library facilities and staff were fabulous, as were the computer facilities. It was wonderful to have evening hours at the library throughout the week.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

In all honesty, there is nothing that I would change. This seminar was truly a perfect experience, on all levels - brilliant intellectual challenge, combined with collegiality, a beautiful environment and a welcoming community.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would be honored to participate in any seminar that Professor Sarat developed within the realm of his areas of expertise in law, jurisprudence and social thought. One topic which I would be interested in exploring further would be a comparative study of global systems of law, jurisprudence and punishment - examining the connections between morality and law within a global context.

Evaluation # 11369

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was a fantastic experience! It was great to work with colleagues from across the country and share knowledge and approaches to teaching. The subject matter will help me be a more well-rounded English teacher, particularly in the area of American literature.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The readings were diverse and interesting and the director was knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All of the facilities were great. The dorm was centrally located and had an air conditioned social room, which was very important.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11373

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar with Prof. Sarat was challenging, stimulating, and exciting. An incredible educational experience. I will benefit from the teaching techniques I learned from the toehr teachers, my nunderstanding of punishment, and my confidence in myself as an educator.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Prof. Sarat is superb at leading a discussion and directing thoughts. I was amazed at how he was able to focus the entire group on a topic and then steer conversation towards class topics. The other participants in the group were excellent as well, and I learned considerable pedagogy on the days that the participants directed the classes.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The library and computer facilities at Amherst were modern, accessible, and very comfortable. I did not stay on campus and cannot comment on the housing. The campus is breathtaking.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Make it longer. The experience was thrilling.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11382

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar exceeded my expectations. The experience challenged all preconceived ideas I had on the topic and compelled me to look at issues from every possible perspective. Austin Sarat's seminar methodology for exploring ideas is one I will use in my classroom to engage students and to teach critical thinking skills.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I am in awe of Professor Austin Sarat's wealth of knowledge and of the brilliance of my colleagues. Parsing the reading material was often very difficult, but Austin's Socratic method of inquiry made the material comprehensible. I wanted to be intellectually challenged this summer, and wanted the time and space to think; I was not disappointed. This seminar has been like a spa for the mind.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality,

housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Austin and his assistant Megan couldn't have been more hospitable. Every detail of our stay was of taken care of. From the moment I received a phone call from Austin informing me that I was accepted, it was apparent that he was sincerely welcoming me into the program. Megan and Austin were in frequent email contact with the participants for three months before we arrived. Once we were here, they already seemed like old friends. Amherst College is the perfect location for this program: its facilities are outstanding, especially the library. The dorm was conveniently located near the seminar meeting location, dining facilities, and the center of town. This was particularly important for those of us without cars this summer.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Not one.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Dr. Kevin Kolbeck is an instructor at Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, CA. He is also an expert on the life and literature of Flannery O'Connor. I've attended his summer seminar on O'Connor's writings, which he has twice offered for friends, students and colleagues. I think this would make an excellent NEH Seminar. His email is kkolbeck@thomasaquinas.edu

Evaluation # 11538**Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.**

Excellent. It was an intellectual workout--invigorating and energizing. It was a model for how to conduct a seminar. Among its inspiring features were a challenging curriculum with varied texts (literature, sociology, law, philosophy, film); Dr. Sarat, a very knowledgeable and engaging seminar leader; and responsive seminar participants.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Director--Although Dr. Sarat has a playful approach as a teacher, it was clear to all that he works very hard at what he does and this was inspirational to many. In addition, he was solicitous of student concerns and met with each of us individually through the course. He provided challenging readings and presentations. His introduction of topics by hypothetical factual situations got the group going; polling everyone around the table kept everyone engaged, as well as giving the group a sense of the range of opinions on an issue. Colleagues--Colleagues were a diverse group of teachers eager to be intellectually challenged and to bring back the best features of the seminar into their own classrooms. Topics, organization, discussions and activities--Dr. Sarat has a deep knowledge of the topic of

punishment and its relationship to law, society and culture. The readings were well organized to probe the subject from many different points of views. Discussions were focused, stimulating and multi-layered. For many, weekly presentations by seminar participants provided some of the best models for what teacher workshops and professional development should look like. Teachers collaborated to creatively present and explore aspects of punishment--whether by having other seminar participants compare film clips, historical events, participate in mock trials or write poems. Participants were thus given a a voice to explore their own interests on the subject matter of the seminar.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is a wonderful place--leafy and green, aptly characterized by Dr. Sarat, the seminar leader, as the "State of Bliss." Among its blissful features are the rich resources of the air-conditioned, open-stacked library, to which we were granted library privileges, and the computer facilities. Dr. Sarat and Megan Estes, who helped administer the program, sought to make everyone's stay at the college a rewarding experience. Drew House, where we lived, is a beautiful, conveniently located house with lovely rooms; each participant had the privacy of his/her own room.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Air conditioning! The most difficult aspect of the experience was the unexpected heat wave. Dr. Sarat and Megan Estes did whatever they could to mitigate the reality that dormitories at Amherst are not air conditioned. They had airconditioners installed in the common room of Drew House and provided each room with fans. In addition, they informed us of airconditioned havens on campus.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 11620

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The architecture of this seminar was crafted in such an intelligent, interdisciplinary manner that I was continually pushed to discover new ideas, insights, and revelations about our society, our government, and the foundation of our country. These revelations will not only effect my pedagogy and content as a teacher, but my doctoral work and my own personal reflections.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin is one of the most masterful teachers I have never encountered. Learning from him is a gift. His ability to use a highly structured Socratic seminar as a forum for ideas and challenges, was not only engaging, it mimicked the

fundamental ideas at stake in our seminar discussion. the entire program was outstanding. It was an honor to work with such an outstanding scholar and human being.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

All arrangements were above and beyond my expectations. They were fantastic.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

None.

Evaluation # 11775

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was extremely enriching. I believe it will help my teaching in that it provided new ways, through the lens of punishment and what it reveals about society and culture, to approach various topics in Classical, European and World History. It also provided a particularly useful framework for approaching issues of crime and attitudes towards the law for my course in Urban Studies as well. I have already begun reading the supplemental readings provided and suggested by the director for inclusion in future courses.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director was engaging, enthusiastic and extremely knowledgeable. I was especially impressed by his pedagogical techniques and will use them in my own classroom; I'm sure that they will get students thinking and participating in class discussions right from the start! The topics were fascinating, moving from the general to the particular, and there was an impressive thematic continuity running through the entire course. Discussions were always stimulating, and I enjoyed the opportunity to work with my colleagues in group projects, particularly since these activities have provided me with a wealth of ideas and lesson plans to use in my own courses!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was a wonderful host. The library was a fantastic resource, and the computer facilities were excellent. As I am a local resident, I did not need to live on campus.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No, I really think everything was great. I would have loved to go for another couple of weeks!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

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2006 EVALUATIONS

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Workshop Evaluations

Punishment, Politics, and Culture

Number of evaluations: 14

Evaluation # 3052

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This has been an Intellectually enlgorating experience. I'm happy to return to my students with new Ideas on how to approach the standard curriculum, to complicate their thinking as Dr. Sarat has complicated mine.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is a great teacher. He's funny & humble, and has a tremendous command of the subject as well as related subjects. He made each of us feel included and important, at least that was my experience and I think it was shared. Class was well organized, yet flexibility was evident. I very much enjoyed a group of colleagues with similar interests and differing opinions and feel that the connections made here this summer will be helpful in the future.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Dr. Sarat was a good host. The welcoming dinner and subsequent outings that he organized helped to build camaraderie and I felt less alone in an unfamiliar location. I didn't stay in the dorm (Garman), but from what I observed, it seemed inadequate. A remodel is overdue! I was fortunate to have found my own, quite satisfactory, housing near campus through the Univ. of Mass off-campus housing website (or maybe it was Craigslist). I probably could've used a little more help ahead of time, in terms of more off-campus options. The library was very good and the staff was helpful, but it closed daily at 4 pm, which was inconvenient. Computer lab was great, although printing was expensive. The cafeteria style dining hall was very good. Lots of healthy food at convenient times & reasonable prices.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

See above, re. housing. Karen Underwood, the program assistant, has been very, very helpful in answering all sorts of questions about housing, transportation, food, etc. I felt that both she and Dr. Sarat evidenced care for my personal well-being during my stay here.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3088

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was an incredible experience both as a lesson in critical thinking and in gaining a contextual understanding of punishment in America. We covered an extraordinary amount of text, ranging from fiction to Supreme Court decisions that gave a multi-faceted approach to the topic. The seminar participants were exemplary students, astonishingly insightful peers and I can only suspect, top-shelf educators. Likely I will incorporate a much more nuanced approach to my teaching of several shared texts, including "Walden." However, what I expect to use most often is the Socratic approach modeled by the instructor. Astonishingly, he rarely gave his opinion on any of the charged topics that we covered and yet managed to tease out all of the confounding factors and complexities of my own. Beyond teaching, he facilitated my own learning using strategies that I intend to emulate on multiple levels in the classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director of our seminar was exemplary in his preparation, pedagogical style, knowledge base and willingness to serve. He provided as many resources as we could handle, some with a view to future readings, should we find any particular topic of interest. Austin achieved a perfect blend of group discussion, group work, lecturing and independent study. All of these approaches melded nicely and often flowed seamlessly into each other. Furthermore, his choice of texts created a pleasantly complicated experience. His assistant was accommodating and prompt in regard to any concerns that arose.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

It was a fabulous experience to enjoy the facilities at Amherst College. Their library and media resources are peerless, the campus is beautiful and the town itself a great place to wander around for five weeks. Any of the faculty or staff that I encountered was more than happy to provide me with the resources that I required.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3025

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar has been rejuvenating not only because it has been intellectually challenging but also because Professor Sarat has a genuine commitment to a more just and inclusive world. Whereas many in his position are enamored with their own prowess or professional status, Mr. Sarat has an infectious joy in his studies and a genuine commitment to others. I have taken as many graduate courses as someone with a Ph.D. at least one MA but Professor Sarat is the type of teacher I aspire to become because his class is almost entirely driven by questions and he addresses his students not just as rational agents but also as creatures who are capable of enlarging their senses of empathy. While I have no illusions that I will attain Mr. Sarat's philosophical clarity or generate the same level of interest on the part of my students, I do feel confirmed in my general method. More concretely, he has enlightened my approach to two course texts and reinforced my commitment to teaching non-fiction.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

My colleagues were sweet and engaged. Two of them contributed substantially to my understanding of the course materials.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The library and computer facilities were good, but the dorm was quite Spartan for adults. As Yeats put it, "That is no country for old men."

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

A better dorm would help.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Lee Patterson, Yale Martin Harries, Modern Drama, NYU

Evaluation # 3102

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Overall--amazingly well-planned, provocative, engaging, and challenging. The readings and discussions covered a vast array of issues of punishment, redemption, criminality, judicial decisions, constitutional law, etc... Many were new types of literature (e.g., court cases) and required a different approach from what I'm used to in reading for pleasure. I plan to start a book/film club in my school district to discuss issues of racism, social justice and educational reform in order to continue the type of intellectual dialogue begun here.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is incredibly well-versed in so many aspects of law and literature and infuses each seminar with his quirky wit, mind-bending hypothetical situations, and frightening requests for simple definitions of basic terms such as "justice", "equality" and "discrimination". I would have liked to spend more time delving into *Beloved* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Perhaps group projects could be limited (just 2 or 3) in lieu of more writing projects to synthesize the readings. Also, focus questions could help us maximize what we extract from the texts.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Excellent library facilities/media center Wonderful hospitality (Karen Underwood--our first contact--was thorough, accommodating, and hospitable) AC in Garman house (unrealistic request, probably)--larger fridge?

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Visit a prison; meet with legislator re: corrections THANK YOU FOR REINVIGORATING MY INTELLECTUAL SPIRIT, NEH!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3132

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This seminar will greatly affect my teaching. Regardless of the content, the instructor's style, approaches, nuances, and ideas from the participants will be incorporated into my teaching methods.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

A new topic to me, the seminar breathed life into a document called the US Constitution. This was made possible by the readings, discussions, applications and insights offered by the instructor and group. Lastly the reading load was fantastic as it expected us to be skilled "grad-like" students. The seminar's specific aspects made the whole a definitive experience for teachers/academics

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everything was provided with warmth, promptness, and with excellent quality.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Suggested topics: Causation in History Post-Modern Era Utopian/Dystopian Literature The Philosophy Class in America's High School

Evaluation # 3224

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Because of personal and financial obligations the past ten years, I haven't been involved in satisfying scholarship other than what is necessary for teaching. The time I spent in Amherst provided a much needed boost for me and one which will propel me into the school year with a better idea of ways in which to include rigorous, provocative material in my curriculum. Too many teachers believe rigor means assigning nightly homework to those gifted students in a special class, homework which involves reading more pages of more difficult text. I experienced actual rigor this summer with Austin Sarat through provocative and complex readings along with well-conducted seminar meetings in which to discuss this reading. This summer I recognized that truly demanding text requires complete scholarly attention, increases the learner's need for more flexible schema, and builds self-confidence for the learner in a variety of ways. I cannot think of more important lessons to carry into the classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The organization of the readings, the guiding questions for the entire seminar, and the daily seminar discussions provided a structure that supported developing understanding and involvement in the seminar topic. In addition to assigned readings, we used several films as text which also contributed to an awareness of our seminar topic in popular culture. Austin's organization of all texts (books, movies, excerpted readings, court cases) facilitated a deeper understanding of the topic due to the recursive nature of reading assignments and the reflection of that in discussions.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College was most accomodating in all areas. The library extended summer hours just for the NEH participants; the computer lab was available whenever needed (the computer guy helped me scan ads for my over-deadline-yearbook: really above and beyond); the campus police helped me with a minor-to-them/major-to-me problem with grace and efficacy even after I left Mass. The dorm we lived in was not air-conditioned, something that may receive complaints from others in the seminar who only visited for dinner, but those of us who lived at Garman were seldom uncomfortable and enjoyed the relationships that shared discomfort builds. The college provides summer programs for teens so I was most content with the area of campus selected for our housing since we were far from those away-from-home teens (which look, sound, and act too much like the teens who live in my house). Any problem that came up with the dorm was met with concern and taken care of as soon as mentioned. Karen Underwood, asst. to Austin, helped with travel logistics and provided much needed contact whenever necessary.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Each week Austin had lunch with a small group of participants and asked for input on this matter during lunch. The only suggestion I had to improve the seminar had to do with weekly group projects, and I mentioned this to him during the week I ate lunch with him.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I'd like to see more topics offered in the southern US. I think of the rich Cherokee history in TN, GA, OK or perhaps more offerings having to do with southern writers in places like University of the South, Vanderbilt, Chapel Hill. With the King museum in Atlanta, the Southern Poverty Law Ctr in Birmingham, and the Civil Rgts museum in Memphis seems that there are resources in a geographically related areas that could provide intellectual provocation with timely topics. Another suggestion for a topic that I'd like to pursue would be something to do with linguistics, dialect, language, slang....something along those lines. Thanks for the opportunity to put some ideas in.

Evaluation # 3172

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was excellent! Far beyond my expectations. I enjoyed the challenge of reading and the insights of Austin Sarat. I especially liked his teaching method, some of which I will use in my own classroom teaching. I enjoyed the group work and learned a great deal about the subject of Punishment, Politics, and Culture

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Prof. Sarat had a unique way of teaching and engaging the group in discussion and thought. His way was typical of the Socratic method, and I enjoyed his style. The discussion were something that I looked forward to each day of the seminar.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The seminar room was just right for discussion. Amherst College were cordial in our welcome and showing us around, especially on how to use the library.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No. everything was fabulous!

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3228

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I enjoyed the experience very much and will be able to use much of the materials and discussion quite well in future courses that I will teach.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director was excellent and always encouraged thoughtful discussion. My colleagues were very well chosen (this was not the case at my last seminar). Every person was always ready to contribute to class and always did the reading.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The housing arrangement was not the best and was quite expensive considering what we received. Library and computer facilities were fine.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The group projects seemed to be more trouble than they were worth. It would have been more beneficial to spend more time discussing the readings, particularly in the final week.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3304

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar experience was wonderful in that it was challenging, cooperative, and flexible in regards to the discussion. I believe that it will help my teaching in two ways. First there is material from the class that can be used in my class i.e. Supreme Court cases and *Beloved*. Also, Austin's masterful use of the Socratic method is something that I will certainly try to adapt for my own practice.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was an energetic, knowledgeable and committed instructor. The other teachers were bright, articulate and committed to the seminar. The topics were interesting for the most part. The organization was good but flexible enough so that class discussion could generate its own direction at times. The discussion was informed and mostly good. Finally, the activities were challenging and generally productive.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was top notch in regards to all types of accommodations. I cannot speak for housing as

I commuted.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

More diversity among participants may be helpful if it is possible.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would love to do something on the paradox of safety and freedom and the balance within various political systems. I would love to see how Austin Sarat would handle this topic as well, I believe he would be "totally fabulous".

Evaluation # 3340

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I learned a great deal about the complexities of the judicial, legal, and punitive systems

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director is, of course, quite knowledgeable and well-read.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The people were exceptionally helpful, friendly, etc. However, the housing arrangement in Garman was not suitable for adults. Sleeping was difficult due to the heat, and there seemed to be ants, fleas, other flying critters in the rooms and furniture. Also, while there was a small kitchen, four or five people had primary access to it and to the very limited refrigerator space--perhaps there were too many people for the size of the kitchen facilities.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

House participants in an air-conditioned facility of some sort.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Arab/Islamic literature, ideas, etc. Some sort of seminar regarding the influence of Plato and Plotinus on contemporary psychology, philosophy, etc.

Evaluation # 3290

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar was intellectually both challenging and extremely fun. In regards to the effect it will have on my teaching: I have learned the value of presenting students with hypothetical situations in order to encourage critical thinking. Additionally, the discussions of what is just punishment and what is excessive punishment, will certainly guide my response to my students' actions in class. Finally, much of the seminar course content can be used in my classroom to supplement any unit of study which raises the issue of Justice.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if

any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Every aspect of the program, in regards to the director, Austin, and the content of the course, exceeded my expectations.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The facilities provided by Amherst College were fine. I especially appreciate the fact that the library had extended hours for NEH participants.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3390

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The Professor was engaging because he used effective teaching styles and focused the seminar around big ideas and big questions. I learned so much about the subject matter and the central debates and issues surrounding punishment. What I learned I will be able to bring into my classes and use as a theme in my classes.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I like the group projects, but they felt like they were kind of rushed when we did one a week. I would have rather done one group project every two weeks. In some ways, I might also have liked to do an independent project and then present it to the group.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Hospitality was good. The dorms were pretty funky for what we paid for them. I guess the trade off is that I did like being all in one house...so I guess the being together part was worth the funk. The library was excellent...and the library help was very good. Computer facilities were good.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

I enjoyed most of the readings...but a couple of the court cases were really long for what you got out of them. I would have liked maybe excerpts. Shorten and give more time for group assignments.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3445

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

A very thoughtful seminar--excellent (often lengthy) readings, interesting discussions--a nice selection of films. The contextualist approach--introducing literature, film, court cases, and

academic works within a particular period of time--interdisciplinary in nature--reinforced this teaching imperative.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director provided participants with the daily opportunity for intellectual growth. His teaching style--very engaged, egalitarian, humorous, rigorous, and thoughtful--demands a great commitment on his part to the teaching process--his energy level is incredibly high--a very active mind that compels others to reconsider previously held positions. I learned a great deal from Austin Sarat and my colleagues--and I am again very grateful to the NEH for the opportunity to study during the summer months.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Overall, Amherst College is an ideal location for an NEH seminar. A very beautiful community, plenty of cultural opportunities, and a pleasant campus with first-rate academic facilities--the extended library hours were particularly helpful. My only concern regards the lack of air-conditioning in our residence, Garman House. For most of our stay the in-room temperature of the bedrooms approached 90 degrees--not including humidity. There were several sleepless nights, and most nights, just a few hours of sleep. While most of us teachers are a pretty flexible group, this situation strains good will. If I am fortunate to again attend a seminar in New England, I will likely rent an apartment for the summer rather than stay in college residential housing without air-conditioning. If the house contained one large common air-conditioned room, at least we could move our mattresses into the area on the more difficult nights--an interesting sight, a group of 25-65 year old "professionals" sleeping on the floor...

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The reading load was quite heavy--maybe assign a couple of texts before the seminar begins--in particular, Beloved.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 3714

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

This was a fantastic experience, and I look forward to hopefully having the opportunity of doing more of these in the future. I have come away from this seminar with many wonderful ideas I can't wait to try in my own classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is an incredible teacher. The readings were varied and rigorous but fascinating. The seminar discussions were insightful, stimulating and enjoyable.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The campus was beautiful, and everyone was wonderful.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The weekly group presentations were extremely stressful, especially the first and the last

week.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or Institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

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2005 EVALUATIONS

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES**Workshop Evaluations****Punishment, Politics, and Culture**

Evaluation # 1251

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The seminar effected me profoundly both in terms of personal scholarship and teaching. Thanks to the professor (seminar director), the structure of the seminar, and the subject of consideration my students will benefit directly. I selected this particular topic out of curiosity, interest, and applicability to my teaching subject (English) and the community in which my students live. I will share with my students both directly and indirectly what I have gained from this invaluable experience.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The professor is singularly brilliant but with an important distinction from other scholars, Prof. Sarat loves to teach. He invested himself completely in the seminar always making himself available to the participants, sharing his knowledge, challenging everyone with complex ideas and generating an environment the welcomed and nurtured scholarship and communal understanding.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

As previously stated the hospitality was amazing from Prof. Sarat and Karen Underwood, an administrative assistant for Prof. Sarat. Everything else -- the housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities -- exceeded expectations, created an enjoyable work environment, and added to the outstanding experience.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None ...

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

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Evaluation # 1255

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

It was amazing! The professor and the other participants all made me think of old ideas in new ways. I will bring these methods of critical thinking back to the classroom and explore these ideas with my students.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

•Professor Sarat's depth and breadth of subject knowledge is both impressive and invaluable. His enthusiasm for his area of expertise inspires others to explore their own related interests. •Having the majority of seminar participants in the same dorm fostered a sense of community as well as a natural forum for continuing class discussions. •The weekly group projects were a useful avenue to synthesize the week's concepts. •Use of the Socratic method was both refreshing and effective in keeping all seminar participants engaged. •Professor Sarat was EXTREMELY accessible and approachable.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst College is a perfect place for a seminar. All the facilities were great and the people were warm and friendly. The only thing that could be improved was the lack of air-conditioning on HOT days!

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

•I would be interested in discussing additional reading on how pain and punishment ties in to historical events and how evolving views of what is acceptable as punishment has influenced systems of punishment. A comparison to other countries' forms of punishment would have been interesting too. •Although I appreciated being forced to analyze literature, something I rarely do voluntarily, I would have also enjoyed additional non-fiction related to the topic of pain, punishment, and culture. (For example, excerpts from a book like Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda by Romeo Dallaire.)

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 1260

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My overall assessment is very positive. The seminar was intellectually stimulating and rewarding. I submitted three articles based on work in the seminar to a local newspaper, but otherwise expect no explicit connection between the seminar and my teaching and scholarship. The greatest value came from engaging in serious inquiry and from the opportunity to meet and converse with intelligent, academic teachers.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

The director is an excellent teacher and a dynamic seminar leader. His pedagogy is conducive to intense, collegial, and productive conversation. The director also worked to facilitate a positive social environment.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The host institution has top-notch facilities.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

No.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 1277

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

My overall intellectual experience could not have been more marked. I believe my experience will have a profound impact upon my teaching and personal scholarship. It is difficult at this point for me to specifically assign the value, weight, and impact of the seminar upon my teaching. Generally, it takes me some time after an experience like this to sift through the knowledge gleaned; however, I am certain that the material read, strength of the instruction, and the intellectual friendships fostered here will affect my teaching each day.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

-The director, Austin Sarat, could not have been any more accommodating as a person and leader, any more intelligent as a professor, or any more effective as a leader. -I would have liked for the class to focus a bit more on history and culture. The discussions, activities, and organization of the seminar left absolutely nothing to be desired--they were brilliant.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everything about Amherst College and its appendices were wonderful; however the Garman house dormitory was hot, the bedding substandard and the noise-level on the bordering street made it incredibly difficult to do scholarly work in the room.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Overall, I can think of none.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Bringing Theory into the Classroom

Evaluation # 1377

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The experience was a great success for me. It has sharpened me as a scholar and challenged me to examine many issues that will be applicable in my classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin was an excellent director. He challenged us and kept us on our toes every minute of seminar discussion, but also kept us laughing. Each discussion was like a dance. I was inspired and motivated greatly by most of my colleagues. The seminar topics were many and varied, and though it would be impossible to give each their due in such a short time, I feel that we were able to get our feet wet enough to discuss them intelligently. In addition, Austin provided us with a wealth of supplemental readings. The time we all spent together both in and outside

of class was invaluable, enlightening, and fun.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst was great at meeting our needs as we had them (particularly Karen Underwood and everyone in the LJST dept). The dormitory was sufficient, albeit hot and without A/C. The library and computer labs were fine for my uses; no problems.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

None. It was a wonderful experience, I feel incredibly lucky to have participated, and would recommend it highly to my colleagues who are looking for a lovely and intellectually stimulating summer.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 1407

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

On one hand, I feel that I have gained significant knowledge on the philosophy of punishment that I will use to apply to my classroom teaching of curriculum texts such as *Beloved*, *Essay on Civil Disobedience*, *Antigone*, and *The Crucible*. That was my initial goal of attending the seminar and I feel I've achieved it. On the other hand, the seminar itself was so much more than that. This experience has awakened in me a new curiosity in American justice and the philosophy of punishment. I am now considering returning to school to study law or the depiction of justice in literature, both with the interest of teaching in those areas. I am not using hyperbole when I state that this was one of the best educational experiences of my life.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is now my hero. I found him to be both brilliant and accessible. He directed the seminar in a fashion so that everyone had a chance to speak and discuss issues, and he was always available for individual conferences. He encouraged us to apply the texts in creative ways, and he also arranged outside activities so that we as a group could know each other outside of scholarship discussions (which in turn, made us all more comfortable in class and facilitated more academic discussion). The topics were interesting and I've come away from the seminar feeling like I have a good base of knowledge that will spill over into my daily thinking.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Everyone at Amherst College was extremely hospitable; if I ever had a question or concern, they responded immediately. Also, the welcoming dinner was a pleasant and friendly way to welcome us to the program. The campus facilities themselves were very accessible.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Because of the wealth of knowledge in the area that Austin Sarat offers, this seminar could easily be extended to six weeks in length.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

I would enjoy attending another seminar with Austin Sarat. His particular field of expertise is culture and punishment, but I know there are many areas he could build a seminar around without repeating the information he presented in Politics, Punishment, and Culture. I will be watching the NEH site for future seminars where he is featured.

Evaluation # 1581

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I would have to say that this seminar was a life changing experience for me. Not only because of the topic, but because Austin forced me to really think about my opinions and values. I don't think that my ideas changed that much over the course of the seminar, but I became much more sure of why I held my opinions and could argue them logically instead of just emotionally. I went into the seminar being very concerned that I wouldn't be able to hold my own, but found that I could. I think that my teaching style will change because of this experience. I am much more interested in looking at literature through the lens of politics than I was before this summer. In the past, I have taught novels as novels, without relating them much to the real world. I think this seminar has opened my eyes to the idea of bringing some of the outside into the classroom.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

I cannot say enough good things about Austin. As a teacher, he is amazing; generous, probing, and so very intelligent. As a person he is even more amazing. I was struck by how willing he was to give of his time. Not only did he meet with all of us personally, but he spent off hours with us, going bowling, mini-golfing, having dinner. I was very upset by some of the material we covered as it brought up a lot of upsetting memories for me, and Austin was very helpful in dealing with the situation without letting it turn into a big dramatic incident. We covered a huge amount of material in 5 weeks, and although not all of it was to everyone's taste, I think Austin did a great job of selecting work from different genres and disciplines. The seminar discussions were great. We had very lively give and take and everyone participated pretty equally. We were able to explore everyone's areas of interest while still keeping focused on the main topic. I was not a huge fan of the group work. I think it might have been different had all of us lived together, but with 6 people living off campus it was difficult to arrange times to meet and plan. On the other hand, the group projects were some of the most creative and interesting parts of the seminar.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Most of us lived together in campus housing, and although it was spartan, it was clean and comfortable. The only complaint I have is about the kitchen facilities. There was one standard size refrigerator for 9 people, and it either leaked or froze its contents. The library was excellent as was the computer lab, and the staff at both went out of their way to be helpful.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

New fridge, housing with air conditioning.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 1593

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

The text readings were thought provoking. I have a new found interest in the way we punish people in our society.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is an outstanding professor. The participants were interesting people who had diverse experiences.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

The staff at Amherst College were delightful to work with this summer. The dormitory was hot, dirty, and very uncomfortable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Find air conditioned dormitories.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 1615

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I thought it was well-done, engaging, thought-provoking, and one of the best professional experiences of my life. I anticipate new infusion into my curriculum. Further, I will now examine more closely how I deal with students, especially when doling out things like punishment.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat rocks. His passion, enthusiasm, and command are unparalleled. He exudes a comfortable atmosphere, and commands respect at all times. I did think that most of the people chosen for the program were of the same political ilk. Maybe that's because we're dealing with teachers, but there was a definite liberal slant. Now, I am probably somewhere in the middle, but I think if a wider spectrum were achieved, a more holistic presentation would have been achieved. To Austin's credit, however, he is masterful at making sure all sides are presented, without EVER revealing what his true opinion is in a given matter.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

I rarely interacted with these things.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

More across the board, politically speaking. More on the spot group work. When this was done, I thought it particularly beneficial, and actually in one such session we had perhaps our most heated discussion, and it was the second to last day of the seminar. I would like to have seen more contentiousness from the beginning. Friendly and safe, however.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential

directors (with contact information, if possible).

Evaluation # 1616

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

wonderful seminar -- some of the brightest and most motivated teachers I've met in a while. Outstanding pedagogy -- Inspirational! Interesting readings, although a bit bleak for my tastes. I enjoyed the mix of literature, essays, legal cases, handouts galore and films, which we discussed freely, wrote about, and creatively engaged in small group presentations. I know I will use material in units of my own design come fall.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

See above. I liked the Clarke House as the meeting place for seminars, and the library was excellent. Librarians were helpful and accessible. Computer facilities were also state of the art, making necessary correspondence simple. I was pleased that I was allowed to drive from my summer dwelling near Williams College and not live in the dorms, which I heard were sweltering! Air conditioning is a must nowadays!

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

See above.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Air condition dorm rooms. Keep other living arrangements flexible.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

Massachusetts Writers such as Dickinson, Wharton, James, Hawthorne, Melville, Thoreau, Emerson and Alcott, with visits to writers' homes. Berkshire Artists

Evaluation # 1623

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

Seminar Summary: Punishment, Politics, and Culture As a social activist, I feel that theory must evolve into practice. As an educator, I believe that the application of knowledge is imperative, and that young people can become very powerful agents of social change once they make the important connection between thought and action themselves. The concepts introduced in this seminar have inspired me on multiple levels. As the new school year approaches, I'd like to incorporate some of the more challenging concepts (frustrating questions and ideas) into my lesson plans. In United States history I want to explore enslavement (the experience of blacks living here prior to the Civil War) and genocide more deeply (the experience of Jews or perhaps Native Americans) as criminal acts that profoundly affect the human condition. Can we assess Adolph Eichmann's (Nazi bureaucrat in the Third Reich) and school teacher's (the slaveowner from *Beloved*) role and then determine their levels of responsibility in systems that caused people great harm? Are these men victims themselves, limited by their own shortsightedness? Furthermore, can we pass judgment on Sethe's (slave mother from *Beloved*) decision to kill her own child if her intention was to

prevent her child from experiencing the horrors of perpetual servitude? These are intense questions that need to be asked. In government I want to examine capital punishment's new abolitionist argument in my judiciary unit. Many people have been exonerated in Illinois with the assistance of Northwestern's law school,[1] while many others had their death sentences commuted (to life in prison) by Governor Ryan right before he left office (early 2003).[2] Moreover, if I'm going to talk about the criminal courts, then I should spend time on the sentencing process (specifically the kinds of punishments rendered for specific crimes in accordance with the issue of proportionality). I would also like to discuss the Eighth Amendment to see if my students feel capital punishment is unconstitutional (cruel and unusual – either certain methods or altogether). In sociology I want to connect my units on culture and deviance through talking about why and how we punish people who violate the law. Here my intention is to have my students first analyze why some people engage in criminal activity as a response to their own life situation (individual perspective). Secondly, I want my students to consider whether or not one's intentions (based on their situation) should affect the punishment received after being caught and found guilty. I feel that I have a responsibility to ask difficult questions about the social issues we must confront while presenting a variety of ideas to ponder in class. My goal is to move my students beyond the mere evaluation of policy and more toward creating new ones (when necessary) as a means to building a more just world to live in. This seminar has provided me with a much needed guidance in navigating a series of complex issues that affect us all. It is my hope that what I have learned here can be effectively transferred into lesson plans so my students will ultimately move closer to maximizing their own potential as human beings through practicing greater compassion toward others. 1. <http://www.law.northwestern.edu/cwc/> 2. <http://www.cnn.com/2003/LAW/01/13/cnna.george.ryan/index.html>

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

1. I really valued the instructor's knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, the subject matter because the most effective educators are both well-read and excited about the material they present. When an instructor sets a positive tone, then students are more engaged in the learning process. 2. The teaching approach utilized in the seminar proved both thought-provoking and highly inclusive. Everyone had the opportunity to speak and the instructor kept the discussions moving. Moreover, the combination of readings, discussions, small group work, and films provided for diverse learning opportunities.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

1. Having access to resources (the library) and technology (the computer lab) were helpful in the event they were needed. 2. The social outings (bowling, miniature golf, dinner) allowed seminar participants to get-to-know the instructor on a more personal level. 3. The instructor's assistant always returned emails and calls when I had questions (before my arrival and during my stay). (Housing arrangement addressed below)

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Seminar participants should stay in a better dorm than Garman – a place that has air conditioning and a bigger refrigerator if multiple people are going to be living together for more than a month. Perhaps there should be a different meal plan for people staying on campus (reduced cost).

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

None

Evaluation # 1950

Summarize your overall assessment of the experience and the effect you anticipate it will have on your teaching and scholarship.

I am a high school teacher with twenty years experience and a master's degree in political science. Even so, I needed the challenge of this course to realize how much I continue to enjoy learning and teaching. The course rejuvenated my sense of joy in exploring the mystery of human society in all of its complexity. I am forever thankful for this experience. Both the planning and management of my high school courses will change dramatically.

Evaluate specific aspects of the program, such as the director, visiting faculty (if any), colleagues, topics, organization, discussions, and activities.

Austin Sarat is a fascinating, engaging teacher who demanded a great deal from the course participants. We were asked to read from a variety of sources and disciplines and interact in the classroom on a daily basis. This course was hands down the most challenging and interesting course I have ever been part of in my academic life.

Evaluate the host institution particularly with respect to hospitality, housing arrangements, the suitability of library facilities, and computer facilities.

Amherst is a difficult place in the summer. The dorms have no air conditioning. Temperatures hovered in the 90s with high humidity. It was very uncomfortable. Some of this was relieved by the other facilities such as the library and computer buildings which were first rate. The highlight of Amherst is the exceptional people who were willing to help us in every way possible, especially Karen Underwood, who made our stay much more enjoyable.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

It would be great to get more money for this seminar since it is a five week course. While I very much appreciate the NEH and the allowance they award for the course, it does not cover expenses. The course itself was absolutely fabulous and a great investment of my time this summer.

(Optional) Suggest topics for future seminars or institutes, or names of potential directors (with contact information, if possible).

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